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The Shakespeare Head Edition
of Smollett's Novels

COUNT FATHOM

Volume I

THE ADVENTURES of Ferdinand COUNT FATHOM

By TOBIAS SMOLLETT

Volume I

——*Materiam risus, invenit ad omnes*
Occursus hominum.———
Ridebat curas, nec non et gaudia vulgi;
Interdum et lachrymas fundebat.——

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THE ADVENTURES OF FERDINAND Count FATHOM

TO
DOCTOR ******

YOU and I, my good friend, have often deliberated on the difficulty of writing such a Dedication as might gratify the self-complacency of a patron, without exposing the author to the ridicule or censure of the public; and I think we generally agreed that the task was altogether impracticable.—Indeed, this was one of the few subjects on which we have always thought in the same manner: for notwithstanding that deference and regard which we mutually pay to each other, certain it is, we have often differed, according to the predominancy of those different passions, which frequently warp the opinion, and perplex the understanding of the most judicious.

In Dedication as in Poetry, there is no medium: for, if any one of the human virtues be omitted in the enumeration of the patron's good qualities; the whole address is construed into an affront, and the writer has the mortification to find his praise prostituted to very little purpose.

On the other hand, should he yield to the transports of gratitude or affection which is always apt to exaggerate, and produce no more than the genuine effusions of his heart, the world will make no allowance for the warmth of his passion, but ascribe the praise he bestows, to interested views and sordid adulation.

Sometimes too, dazzled by the tinsel of a character which he has no opportunity to investigate, he pours forth the homage of his admiration, upon some false Mæcenas,

whose future conduct gives the lie to his eulogium, and involves him in shame and confusion of face. Such was the fate of a late ingenious *author, who was so often put to the blush for the undeserved incense he had offered, in the heat of an enthusiastic disposition, misled by popular applause, that he had resolved to retract in his last will, all the encomiums which he had thus prematurely bestowed, and stigmatize the unworthy by name: a laudable scheme of poetical justice, the execution of which was fatally prevented by untimely death.

Whatever may have been the fate of other Dedicators, I, for my own part, sit down to write this address, without any apprehension of disgrace or disappointment; because I know you are too well convinced of my affection and sincerity to repine at what I shall say touching your character and conduct; and you will do me the justice to believe, that this public distinction is a testimony of my particular friendship and esteem.

Not that I am either insensible of your infirmities, or disposed to conceal them from the notice of mankind. There are certain foibles which can only be cured by shame and mortification; and whether or not yours be of that species, I shall have the comfort to think my best endeavours were used for your reformation.

Know then, I can despise your pride, while I honour your integrity; and applaud your taste, while I am shocked at your ostentation.—I have known you trifling, superficial and obstinate in dispute; meanly jealous and awkwardly reserved; rash and haughty in your resentments; and coarse and lowly in your connexions.—I have blushed at the weakness of your conversation, and trembled at the errors of your conduct.—Yet, as I own you possess

*The author of the SEASONS.

certain good qualities, which over-balance these defects, and distinguish you on this occasion, as a person for whom I have the most perfect attachment and esteem, you have no cause to complain of the indelicacy with which your faults are reprehended: and as they are chiefly the excesses of a sanguine disposition and looseness of thought, impatient of caution or controul; you may, thus stimulated, watch over your own intemperance and infirmity, with redoubled vigilance and consideration, and for the future profit by the severity of my reproof.

These, however, are not the only motives that induce me to trouble you with this public application. I must not only perform my duty to my friends, but also discharge the debt I owe to my own interest. We live in a censorious age; and an author cannot take too much precaution to anticipate the prejudice, misapprehension and temerity of malice, ignorance and presumption.

I therefore think it incumbent upon me to give some previous intimation of the plan which I have executed in the subsequent performance, that I may not be condemned upon partial evidence; and to whom can I with more propriety appeal in my explanation, than to you, who are so well acquainted with all the sentiments and emotions of my breast?

A Novel is a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different groupes, and exhibited in various attitudes, for the purposes of an uniform plan, and general occurrence, to which every individual figure is subservient. But this plan cannot be executed with propriety, probability or success, without a principal personage to attract the attention, unite the incidents, unwind the clue of the labyrinth, and at last close the scene by virtue of his own importance.

Almost all the heroes of this kind, who have hitherto succeeded on the English stage, are characters of transcendent worth, conducted through the vicissitudes of fortune, to that goal of happiness, which ever ought to be the repose of extraordinary desert.—Yet the same principle by which we rejoice at the remuneration of merit, will teach us to relish the disgrace and discomfiture of vice, which is always an example of extensive use and influence, because it leaves a deep impression of terror upon the minds of those who were not confirmed in the pursuit of morality and virtue, and while the balance wavers, enables the right scale to preponderate.

In the Drama, which is a more limited field of invention, the chief personage is often the object of our detestation and abhorrence; and we are as well pleased to see the wicked schemes of a RICHARD blasted, and the perfidy of a MASKWELL exposed, as to behold a BEVIL happy, and an EDWARD victorious.

The impulses of fear, which is the most violent and interesting of all the passions, remain longer than any other upon the memory; and for one that is allured to virtue, by the contemplation of that peace and happiness which it bestows, an hundred are deterred from the practice of vice, by that infamy and punishment to which it is liable, from the laws and regulations of mankind.

Let me not therefore be condemned for having chosen my principal character from the purlieus of treachery and fraud, when I declare my purpose is to set him up as a beacon for the benefit of the unexperienced and unwary, who from the perusal of these memoirs, may learn to avoid the manifold snares with which they are continually surrounded in the paths of life; while those who hesitate on the brink of iniquity, may be terrified from plunging

nto that irremeable gulph, by surveying the deplorable ate of FERDINAND Count FATHOM.

That the mind might not be fatigued, nor the imagination disgusted by a succession of vitious objects, I have endeavoured to refresh the attention with occasional incidents of a different nature; and raised up a virtuous character, in opposition to the adventurer, with a view to amuse the fancy, engage the affection, and form a striking contrast which might heighten the expression, and give a *Relief* to the moral of the whole.

If I have not succeeded in my endeavours to unfold he mysteries of fraud, to instruct the ignorant, and entertain the vacant; if I have failed in my attempts to subject folly to ridicule, and vice to indignation; to rouse the spirit of mirth, wake the soul of compassion, and touch he secret springs that move the heart; I have at least, adorned virtue with honour and applause; branded iniquity with reproach and shame, and carefully avoided every hint or expression which could give umbrage to the most delicate reader: circumstances which (whatever may be my fate with the public) will with you always operate n favour of

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate

friend and servant,

The AUTHOR.

THE ADVENTURES OF FERDINAND Count FATHOM

CHAP. I.

Some sage observations that naturally introduce our important history.

CARDINAL de Retz very judiciously observes, that all historians must of necessity, be subject to mistakes, in explaining the motives of those actions they record, unless they derive their intelligence from the candid confession of the person whose character they represent; and that, of consequence, every man of importance ought to write his own memoirs, provided he has honesty enough to tell the truth, without suppressing any circumstance, that may tend to the information of the reader. This, however, is a requisite that, I am afraid, would be very rarely found among the number of those who exhibit their own portraits to the public: indeed, I will venture to say, that how upright soever a man's intentions may be, he will, in the performance of such a task, be sometimes misled by his own phantasy, and represent objects, as they appeared to him, through the mists of prejudice and passion.

An unconcerned reader, when he peruses the history of two competitors, who lived two thousand years ago, or who, perhaps, never had existence, except in the imagina-

tion of the author, cannot help interesting himself in the dispute, and espousing one side of the contest, with all the zeal of a warm adherent. What wonder then, that we should be heated in our own concerns, review our actions with the same self-approbation that they had formerly acquired, and recommend them to the world with all the enthusiasm of paternal affection?

Supposing this to be the case, it was lucky for the cause of historical truth, that so many pens have been drawn by writers, who could not be suspected of such partiality; and that many great personages, among the ancients as well as moderns, either would not, or could not entertain the public with their own memoirs. From this want of inclination or capacity to write, in our hero himself, the undertaking is now left to me, of transmitting to posterity, the remarkable adventures of FERDINAND Count FATHOM; and by that time the reader shall have glanced over the subsequent sheets, I doubt not, but he will bless God, that the adventurer was not his own historian.

This mirrour of modern chivalry was none of those who owe their dignity to the circumstances of their birth, and are consecrated from the cradle for the purposes of greatness, meerly because they are the accidental children of wealth. He was heir to no visible patrimony, unless we reckon a robust constitution, a tolerable appearance, and an uncommon capacity, as the advantages of inheritance; if the comparison obtains in this point of consideration, he was as much as any man, indebted to his parents; and pity it was, that in the sequel of his fortune, he never had an opportunity of manifesting his filial gratitude and regard. From this agreeable act of duty to his sire, and all those tendernesses that are reciprocally enjoyed betwixt the father and the son, he was unhappily excluded by a

small circumstance; at which, however, he was never heard to repine. In short, had he been brought forth in the fabulous ages of the world, the nature of his origin might have turned to his account; he might, like other heroes of antiquity, have laid claim to divine extraction, without running the risque of being claimed by any earthly father; not that his parents had any reason to disown or renounce their offspring, or that there was any thing preternatural in the circumstances of his generation and birth; on the contrary, he was from the beginning, a child of promising parts, and in due course of nature, ushered into the world, amidst a whole cloud of witnesses: but, that he was acknowledged by no mortal sire, solely proceeded from the uncertainty of his mother, whose affections were so dissipated among a number of admirers, that she could never pitch upon the person from whose loins our hero sprung.

Over and above this important doubt, under which he was begotten, other particularities attended his birth, and seemed to mark him out as something uncommon among the sons of men. He was brought forth in a waggon, and might be said to be literally a native of two different countries; for, though he first saw the light in Holland, he was not born till after the carriage arrived in Flanders; so that all these extraordinary circumstances considered, the task of determining to what government he naturally owed allegiance, would be at least as difficult, as that of ascertaining the so much contested birth-place of Homer.

Certain it is, the count's mother was an Englishwoman, who, after having been five times a widow in one campaign, was, in the last year of the renowned Marlborough's command, numbered among the baggage of the allied army, which she still accompanied, through pure bene-

volence of spirit, supplying the ranks with the refreshing streams of choice geneva, and accommodating individuals with clean linnen, as the emergency of their occasions required: Nor was her philanthropy altogether confined to such ministration: she abounded with "the milk of human kindness," which flowed plentifully among her fellow-creatures; and to every son of Mars who cultivated her favour, she liberally dispensed her smiles, in order to sweeten the toils and dangers of the field.

And here it will not be amiss to anticipate the remarks of the reader, who, in the chastity and excellency of his conception, may possibly exclaim, "Good Heaven! will these authors never reform their imaginations, and lift their ideas from the obscene objects of low life? Must the publick be again disgusted with the groveling adventures of a waggon? Will no writer of genius draw his pen in the vindication of taste, and entertain us with the agreeable characters, the dignified conversation, the poignant repartee, in short, the genteel comedy of the polite world?"

Have a little patience, gentle, delicate, sublime, critic; you, I doubt not, are one of those consummate connoisseurs, who in their purifications, let humour evaporate, while they endeavour to preserve decorum, and polish wit, until the edge of it is quite wore off; or, perhaps of that class, who, in the sapience of taste, are disgusted with those very flavours, in the productions of their own country, which have yielded infinite delectation to their faculties, when imported from another clime; and damn an author in despite of all precedent and prescription; who extol the writings of Petronius Arbiter, read with rapture the amorous sallies of Ovid's pen, and chuckle over the story of Lucian's ass; yet, if a modern author presumes to relate the progress of a simple intrigue, are

skocked at the indecency and immorality of the scene: who delight in following Guzman d'Alfarache, thro' all the mazes of squalid beggary; who with pleasure accompany Don Quixote and his squire, in the lowest paths of fortune; who are diverted with the adventures of Scarron's ragged troop of strollers, and highly entertained with the servile situations of Gil Blas, yet, when a character in humble life occasionally occurs in a performance of our own growth, exclaim with an air of disgust, "Was ever any thing so mean! Sure, this writer must have been very conversant with the lowest scenes of life:" who, when Swift or Pope represents a coxcomb in the act of swearing, scruple not to laugh at the ridiculous execrations; but in a less reputed author, condemn the use of such profane expletives: who eagerly explore the jakes of Rabelais, for amusement, and even extract humour from the dean's description of a lady's dressing-room: yet, in a production of these days, unstampt with such venerable names, will stop their noses with all the signs of loathing and abhorrence, at a bare mention of the china chamber-pot: who applaud Catullus, Juvenal, Persius and Lucan, for their spirit in lashing the greatest names of antiquity; yet, when a British satirist, of this generation, has courage enough to call in question the talents of a Pseudo-patron, in power, accuse him of insolence, rancour and scurrility.

If such you be, courteous reader, I say again, have a little patience; for your entertainment we are about to write. Our hero shall, with all convenient dispatch, be gradually sublimed, into those splendid connexions of which you are enamoured; and God forbid, that in the mean time, the nature of his extraction should turn to his prejudice, in a land of freedom like this, where individuals are every day ennobled in consequence of their own quali-

fications, without the least retrospective regard to the rank or merit of their ancestors. Yes, refined reader, we are hastening to that goal of perfection, where satire dares not shew her face; where nature is castigated, almost even to still life; where humour turns changeling, and slavers in an insipid grin; where wit is volatilized into a meer vapour; where decency, divested of all substance, hovers about like a fantastic shadow; where the salt of genius, escaping, leaves nothing but pure and simple phlegm; and the inoffensive pen for ever drops the mild manna of soul-sweetning praise.

CHAP. II.

A superficial view of our hero's infancy.

HAVING thus bespoke the indulgence of our guests, let us now produce the particulars of our entertainment, and speedily conduct our adventurer through the stage of infancy, which seldom teems with interesting incidents.

As the occupations of his mother would not conveniently permit her to suckle this her first-born at her own breast, and those happy ages were now no more, in which the charge of nursing a child might be left to the next goat or she-wolf, she resolved to improve upon the ordinances of nature, and foster him with a juice much more energic than the milk of goat, or wolf, or woman; this was no other than that delicious nectar, which, as we have already hinted, she so cordially distributed from a small cask that hung before her, depending from her shoulders by a leathern zone. Thus determined, ere he was yet twelve days old, she enclosed him in a canvas knapsack,

which being adjusted to her neck, fell down upon her back, and balanced the cargo that rested on her bosom.

There are not wanting those who affirm, that while her double charge was carried about in this situation, her cag was furnished with a long and slender flexible tube, which, when the child began to be clamorous, she conveyed into his mouth, and strait he stilled himself with sucking; but this we consider as an extravagant assertion of those, who mix the marvellous in all their narrations, because we cannot conceive how the tender organs of an infant, could digest such a fiery beverage, which never fails to discompose the constitutions of the most hardy and robust: we therefore conclude, that the use of this potation was more restrained, and that it was with simple element, diluted into a composition adapted to his taste and years. Be this as it will, he certainly was indulged in the use of it to such a degree, as would have effectually obstructed his future fortune, had not he been happily cloyed with the repetition of the same fare, for which he conceived the utmost detestation and abhorrence, rejecting it with loathing and disgust, like those choice spirits, who, having been crammed with religion in their childhood, renounce it in their youth, among other absurd prejudices of education.

While he thus dangled in a state of suspension, a German trooper was transiently smit with the charms of his mother, who listened to his honourable addresses, and once more received the silken bonds of matrimony; the ceremony having been performed as usual at the drum-head. The lady had no sooner taken possession of her new name, than she bestowed it upon her son, who was thenceforward distinguished by the appellation of Ferdinand de Fadom; nor was the husband offended at this presumption in his wife, which he not only considered as a proof

of her affection and esteem, but also as a compliment, by which he might in time acquire the credit of being the real father as such an hopeful child.

Notwithstanding this new engagement with a foreigner, our Hero's mother still exercised the virtues of her calling among the English troops, so much was she biassed by that laudable partiality, which, as Horace observes, the *natale solum* generally inspires: indeed this inclination was enforced by another reason, that did not fail to influence her conduct in this particular; all her knowledge of the high Dutch language consisted in some words of traffic, absolutely necessary for the practice of her vocation; together with sundry oaths and terms of reproach, that kept her customers in awe; so that, except among her own countrymen, she could not indulge that propensity to conversation, for which she had been remarkable from her earliest years. Nor did this instance of her affection fail of turning to her account in the sequel: She was promoted to the office of cook to a regimental mess of officers; and before the peace of Utrecht, was actually in possession of a suttling-tent, pitched for the accommodation of the gentlemen in the army.

Mean while, Ferdinand improved apace in the accomplishments of infancy; his beauty was conspicuous, and his vigour so uncommon, that he was with justice likened unto Hercules in the cradle: the friends of his father-in-law, dandled him on their knees, while he played with their whiskers, and before he was thirteen months old, taught him to suck brandy impregnated with gun-powder, through the touch-hole of a pistol. At the same time, he was caressed by divers serjeants of the British army, who severally and in secret contemplated his qualifications with a father's pride, excited by the artful declaration, with which the mother had flattered each apart.

Soon as the war was (for her unhappily) concluded, she, as in duty bound, followed her husband into Bohemia; and his regiment being sent into garrison at Prague, she opened a cabaret in that city, which was frequented by a good many guests of the Scotch and Irish nations, who were devoted to the exercise of arms, in the service of the emperor. It was by this communication, that the English tongue became vernacular to young Ferdinand, who, without such opportunity, would have been a stranger to the language of his forefathers, in spite of all his mother's loquacity and elocution: though it must be owned, for the credit of her maternal care, that she let slip no occasion of making it familiar to his ear and conception; for, even at those intervals in which she could find no person to carry on the altercation, she used to hold forth in earnest soliloquies upon the subject of her own situation, giving vent to many opprobrious invectives against her husband's country, between which and old England she drew many odious comparisons; and prayed without ceasing that Europe might speedily be involved in a general war, so that she might have some chance of reinjoying the pleasures and emoluments of a Flanders compaign.

CHAP. III.

He is initiated in a military life, and has the good fortune to acquire a generous patron.

WHILE she wearied Heaven with these petitions, the flame of war broke out betwixt the houses of Ottoman and Austria, and the emperor sent forth an army into Hungary, under the auspices of the renowned prince Eugene. On account of this expedition, the mother of our hero gave up house-keeping, and chearfully followed her

customers and husband into the field; having first provided herself with store of those commodities, in which she had formerly merchandized. Although the hope of profit might in some measure affect her determination, one of the chief motives for her visiting the frontiers of Turkey, was the desire of initiating her son in the rudiments of his education, which she now thought high time to inculcate, he being, at this period, in the sixth year of his age; he was accordingly conducted to the camp, which she considered as the most consummate school of life, and proposed for the scene of his instruction; and in this academy he had not continued many weeks, when he was an eye-witness of that famous victory, which, with sixty thousand men, the imperial general obtained over an army of one hundred and fifty thousand Turks.

His father-in-law was engaged, and his mother would not be idle on this occasion: she was a perfect mistress of all the camp qualifications, and thought it a duty incumbent on her, to contribute all that lay in her power, towards distressing the enemy: with these sentiments, she hovered about the skirts of the army, and the troops were no sooner employed in the pursuit, than she began to traverse the field of battle with a poignard and a bag, in order to consult her own interest, annoy the foe, and exercise her humanity at the same time. In short, she had with amazing prowess, delivered some fifty or threescore disabled mussulmen of the pain under which they groaned, and made a comfortable booty of the spoils of the slain, when her eyes were attracted by the rich attire of an imperial officer, who lay bleeding on the plain, to all appearance in the agonies of death.

She could not, in her heart, refuse that favour to a friend and christian, she had so compassionately bestowed

upon so many enemies and infidels, and therefore drew near with the sovereign remedy, which she had already administred with such success. As she approached this deplorable object of pity, her ears were surprized with an ejaculation in the English tongue, which he fervently pronounced, though with a weak and languid voice, recommending his soul to God, and his family to the protection of Heaven. Our amazon's purpose was staggered by this providential incident: the sound of her native language, so unexpectedly heard, and so pathetically delivered, had a surprising effect upon her imagination; and the faculty of reflexion did not forsake her in such emergency: though she could not recollect the features of this unhappy officer, she concluded from his appearance, that he was some person of distinction in the service, and foresaw greater advantage to herself in attempting to preserve his life, than she could possibly reap from the execution of her first resolve. "If (said she to herself) I can find means of conveying him to his tent, alive, he cannot but in conscience acknowledge my humanity with some considerable recompence; and should he chance to survive his wounds, I have every thing to expect from his gratitude and power."

Fraught with these prudential suggestions, she drew near the unfortunate stranger, and in a softened accent of pity and condolance, questioned him concerning his name, condition, and the nature of his mischance, at the same time making a gentle tender of her service. Agreeably surprized to hear himself accosted in such a manner, by a person whose equipage seemed to promise far other designs, he thanked her in the most grateful terms for her humanity, with the appellation of kind countrywoman; gave her to understand that he was colonel of a regiment

of horse; that he had fallen in consequence of a shot he received in his breast, at the beginning of the action; and finally intreated her to procure some carriage on which he might be removed to his tent. Perceiving him faint and exhausted with loss of blood, she raised up his head, and treated him with that cordial which was her constant companion: at that instant, espying a small body of hussars returning to the camp with the plunder they had taken, she invoked their assistance, and they forthwith carried the officer to his own quarters, where his wound was dressed, and his preserver carefully tended him until his recovery was compleated.

In return for these good offices, this gentleman, who was originally of Scotland, rewarded her for the present, with great liberality, assured her of his influence in promoting her husband, and took upon himself the charge of young Ferdinand's education; the boy was immediately taken into his protection, and entered as a trooper in his own regiment; but his good intentions towards his father-in-law, were frustrated by the death of the German, who in a few days after this disposition, was shot in the trenches before Temiswaer.

This event, over and above the conjugal affliction with which it invaded the lady's quiet, would have involved her in infinite difficulty and distress, with regard to her temporal concerns, by leaving her unprotected in the midst of strangers, had not she been thus providentially supplied with an effectual patron in the colonel, who was known by the appellation of count Melvil. He no sooner saw her, by the death of her husband, detached from all personal connexions with a military life, than he proposed that she should quit her occupation in the camp, and retire to his habitation in the city of Presburg, where she

would be entertained in ease and plenty, during the remaining part of her natural life; with all due acknowledgments of his generosity, she begged to be excused from embracing his proposal, alledging she was so much accustomed to her present way of life, and so much devoted to the service of the soldiery, that she should never be happy in retirement, while the troops of any prince of Christendom kept the field.

The count finding her determined to prosecute her scheme, repeated his promise of befriending her upon all occasions; and in the mean time, admitted Ferdinand into the number of his domestics, resolving that he should be brought up in attendance upon his own son, who was a boy of the same age. He kept him, however, in his tent, until he should have an opportunity of revisiting his family in person; and before that occasion offered, two whole years elapsed, during which, the illustrious prince Eugene gained the celebrated battle of Belgrade, and afterwards made himself master of that important frontier.

CHAP. IV.

His mother's prowess and death; together with some instances of his own sagacity.

IT would have been impossible for the mother of our adventurer, such as she hath been described, to sit quietly in her tent, while such an heroic scene was acting. She was no sooner apprised of the general's intention to attack the enemy, than she, as usual, packed up her moveables in a waggon, which she committed to the care of a peasant in the neighbourhood, and put herself in motion with the troops; big with the expectation of re-acting that

part, in which she had formerly acquitted herself so much to her advantage. Nay, she by this time looked upon her own presence as a certain omen of success to the cause which she espoused; and in their march to battle, actually encouraged the ranks with repeated declarations, importing, that she had been eye-witness of ten decisive engagements, in all of which her friends had been victorious, and imputing such uncommon good fortune to some supernatural quality inherent in her person.

Whether or not this confidence contributed to the fortune of the day, by inspiriting the soldiers to an uncommon pitch of courage and resolution, I shall not pretend to determine: but, certain it is, the victory began from that quarter in which she had posted herself; and no corps in the army behaved with such intrepidity as that, which was manifested by those who were favoured with her admonitions and example; for, she not only exposed her person to the enemy's fire, with the indifference and deliberation of a veteran, but she is said to have achieved a very conspicuous exploit by the prowess of her single arm: the extremity of the line to which she had attached herself, being assaulted in flank by a body of the spahis, wheeled about, in order to sustain the charge, and received them with such a seasonable fire, as brought a great number of turbans to the ground; among those who fell, was one of the chiefs, or aga's, who had advanced before the rest, with a view to signalize his valour.

Our English Penthesilea no sooner saw this Turkish leader drop, than, struck with the magnificence of his own and horse's trappings, she sprung forward to seize them as her prize, and found the aga not dead, though in a good measure disabled by his misfortune, which was intirely owing to the weight of his horse, that, having been killed

by a musket-ball, lay upon his leg, so that he could not disingage himself. Nevertheless, perceiving the virago approach with fell intent, he brandished his scymitar, and tried to intimidate his assailant with a most horrible exclamation; but, it was not the dismal yell of a dismounted cavalier, though enforced with a hideous ferocity of countenance, and the menacing gestures with which he waited her approach, that could intimidate such an undaunted she-campaigner; she saw him writhing in the agonies of a situation from which he could not move; and, running towards him with the nimbleness and intrepidity of a Camilla, described a semicircle in the progress of her assault, and attacking him on one side, plunged her well-tried dagger in his throat: the shades of death encompassed him, his life-blood issued at the wound, he fell prone upon the earth, he bit the dust, and having thrice invoked the name of Allah! straight expired.

While his destiny was thus fulfilled, his followers began to reel; they seemed dismayed at the fate of their chief, beheld their companions drop like the leaves in autumn, and suddenly halted in the midst of their career. The Imperialists observing the confusion of the enemy, redoubled their fire; and raising a dreadful shout, advanced in order to improve the advantage they had gained: the spahis durst not wait the shock of such an encounter; they wheeled to the right about, and clapping spurs to their horses, fled in the utmost disorder. This was actually the circumstance that turned the scale of battle: the Austrians pursued their good fortune with uncommon impetuosity, and in a few minutes, left the field clear for the mother of our hero, who was such an adept in the art of stripping, that in the twinkling of an eye, the bodies of the aga and his Arabian, lay naked to the skin. It would have been

happy for her, had she been contented with these first-fruits, reaped from the fortune of the day, and retired with her spoils, which were not inconsiderable; but, intoxicated with the glory she had won, inticed by the glittering caparisons that lay scattered on the plain, and without doubt, prompted by the secret instinct of her fate, she resolved to seize opportunity by the forelock, and once for all indemnify herself for the many fatigues, hazards and sorrows she had undergone.

Thus determined, she reconnoitred the field, and practised her address so successfully, that in less than half an hour, she was loaded with ermin and embroidery, and disposed to retreat with her burden, when her regards were sollicited by a splendid bundle, which she descried at some distance lying on the ground. This was no other than an unhappy officer of hussars; who, after having had the good fortune to take a Turkish standard, was desperately wounded in the thigh, and obliged to quit his horse; finding himself in such an helpless condition, he had wrapped his acquisition round his body, that whatever might happen, he and his glory should not be parted; and thus shrouded among the dying and the dead, he had observed the progress of our heroine, who stalked about the field, like another Atropos, finishing, wherever she came, the work of death: he did not at all doubt, that he himself would be visited in the course of her peregrinations, and therefore provided for her reception, with a pistol ready cock'd in his hand, while he lay perdue, beneath his covert, in all appearance bereft of life. He was not deceived in his prognostic; she no sooner eyed the golden crescent, than inflamed with curiosity or cupidity, she directed thitherward her steps, and discerning the carcase of a man, from which, she thought, there would be a

necessity for disengaging it, she lifted up her weapon, in order to make sure of her purchase; and in the very instant of discharging her blow, receiv'd a brace of bullets in her brain.

Thus ended the mortal pilgrimage of this modern amazon; who, in point of courage, was not inferior to Semiramis, Tomyris, Zenobia, Thalestris, or any boasted heroine of antient times. It cannot be supposed, that this catastrophe made a very deep impression upon the mind of young Ferdinand, who had just then attained the ninth year of his age, and been for a considerable time, weaned from her maternal caresses; especially, as he felt no wants nor grievances in the family of the count, who favoured him with a particular share of indulgence, because he perceived in him, a spirit of docility, insinuation, and sagacity, far above his years. He did not, however, fail to lament the untimely fate of his mother, with such filial expressions of sorrow, as still more intimately recommended him to his patron; who being, himself, a man of extraordinary benevolence, looked upon the boy as a prodigy of natural affection, and foresaw in his future services a fund of gratitude and attachment, that could not fail to render him a valuable acquisition to his family.

In his own country he had often seen connections of that sort, which having been planted in the infancy of the adherent, had grown up to a surprising pitch of fidelity and friendship, that no temptation could biass, and no danger dissolve. He therefore rejoiced in the hope of seeing his own son accommodated with such a faithful attendant, in the person of young Fathom, on whom he resolved to bestow the same education he had planned for the other, though conveyed in such a manner as should be suitable to the sphere in which he was ordained to move. In con-

sequence of these determinations, our young adventurer led a very easy life, in quality of page to the count, in whose tent he lay upon a pallet, close to his field-bed, and often diverted him with his childish prattle in the English tongue, which the more seldom his master had occasion to speak, he the more delighted to hear. In the exercise of his function, the boy was incredibly assiduous and alert; far from neglecting the little particulars of his duty, and embarking in the mischievous amusements of the children belonging to the camp, he was always diligent, sedate, agreeably officious and anticipating; and in the whole of his behaviour, seemed to express the most vigilant sense of his patron's goodness and generosity: nay, to such a degree had these sentiments, in all appearance, operated upon his reflexion, that one morning while he supposed the count asleep, he crept softly to his bedside, and gently kissing his hand, which happened to be uncovered, pronounced, in a low voice, a most fervent prayer in his behalf, beseeching Heaven to shower down blessings upon him, as the widow's friend and the orphan's father: this benediction was not lost upon the count, who chanced to be awake and heard it with admiration; but, what rivetted Ferdinand in his good graces, was a discovery that our youth made, while his master was upon duty in the trenches before Belgrade.

Two foot-soldiers standing centry near the door of the tent, were captivated with the sight of some valuable moveables belonging to it, and supposing, in their great wisdom, that the city of Belgrade was too well fortified to be taken during that campaign, they came to a resolution of with-drawing themselves from the severe service of the trenches, by deserting to the enemy, after they should have rifled count Melvil's tent, of the furniture

by which they were so powerfully allured: the particulars of this plan were concerted in the French language, which, they imagined, would screen them from all risk of being detected, in case they should be overheard, though, as there was no living creature in sight, they had no reason to believe, that any person was privy to their conversation. Nevertheless, they were mistaken in both these conjectures. The conference reached the ears of Fathom, who was at the other end of the tent, and had perceived the eager looks, with which they considered some parts of the furniture: he had penetration enough to suspect their desire, and alarmed by that suspicion, listened attentively to their discourse, which from a slender knowledge in the French tongue, he had the good fortune partly to understand.

This important piece of intelligence he communicated to the count at his return, and measures were immediately taken to defeat the design, and make an example of the authors, who being permitted to load themselves with the booty, were apprehended in their retreat, and punished with death according to their demerits.

CHAP. V.

A brief detail of his education.

NOTHING could have more seasonably happened, to confirm the good opinion which the colonel entertained of Ferdinand's principles: his intentions towards the boy grew every day more and more warm; and immediately after the peace of Passarowitz, he retired to his own house at Presburg, and presented young Fathom to his lady, not only as the son of a person to whom he owed his life, but also as a lad, who merited his peculiar protec-

tion and regard by his own personal virtue. The countess, who was an Hungarian, received him with great kindness and affability, and her son was ravished with the prospect of enjoying such a companion: in short, fortune seemed to have provided for him an asylum, in which he might be safely trained up, and suitably prepared for more important scenes of life, than any of his ancestors had ever known.

He was not, in all respects, entertained on the footing of his young master; yet he shar'd in all his education and amusements, as one whom the old gentleman was fully determined to qualify for the station of an officer in the service; and if he did not eat with the count, he was every day regaled with choice bits from his table; holding, as it were, a middle place between the rank of a relation, and favoured domestic. Although his patron maintained a tutor in the house, to superintend the conduct of his heir, he committed the charge of his learning to the instructions of a public school; where, he imagined, the boy would imbibe a laudable spirit of emulation among his fellows, which could not fail of turning out to the advantage of his education. Ferdinand was entered in the same academy; and the two lads proceeded equally in the paths of erudition; a mutual friendship and intimacy soon ensued, and notwithstanding the levity and caprice commonly discernible in the behaviour of such boys, very few, or rather no quarrels happened in the course of their communication. Yet their dispositions were altogether different, and their talents unlike. Nay, this dissimilarity was the very bond of their union; because it prevented that jealousy and rivalship which often interrupts the harmony of two warm cotemporaries.

The young count made extraordinary progress in the

exercises of the school, though he seemed to take very little pains in the cultivation of his studies; and became a perfect hero in all the athletic diversions of his fellow-scholars; but, at the same time, exhibited such a bashful appearance and uncouth address, that his mother despaired of ever seeing him improved into any degree of polite behaviour. On the other hand, Fathom, who was in point of learning a meer dunce, became, even in his childhood, remarkable among the ladies for his genteel deportment and vivacity; they admired the proficiency he made, under the directions of his dancing-master, the air with which he performed his obeisance at his entrance and exit; and were charmed with the agreeable assurance and lively sallies of his conversation; while they expressed the utmost concern and disgust at the boorish demeanour of his companion, whose extorted bows resembled the pawings of a mule, who hung his head in silence, like a detected sheep-stealer, who sat in company under the most awkward expressions of constraint, and whose discourse never exceeded the simple monosyllables of negation and assent.

In vain did all the females of the family propose to him young Fathom, as a pattern and reproach: he remained unaltered by all their efforts and expostulations, and allowed our adventurer to enjoy the triumph of his praise, while he himself was conscious of his own superiority in those qualifications which seemed of more real importance than the meer exteriors and forms of life. His present ambition was not to make a figure at his father's table, but to eclipse his rivals at school, and to acquire an influence and authority among these confederates. Nevertheless, Fathom might possibly have fallen under his displeasure or contempt, had not that pliant genius found means to retain his friendship by seasonable compliances

and submission; for, the sole study, or at least the chief aim of Ferdinand, was to make himself necessary and agreeable to those on whom his dependance was placed: his talent was in this particular suited to his inclination; he seemed to have inherited it from his mother's womb; and without all doubt, would have raised upon it, a most admirable superstructure of fortune and applause, had not it been inseparably yoked with a most insidious principle of self-love, that grew up with him from the cradle, and left no room in his heart for the least particle of social virtue. This last, however, he knew so well how to counterfeit, by means of a large share of ductility and dissimulation, that, surely, he was calculated by nature, to dupe even the most cautious, and gratify his appetites by levying contributions on all mankind.

So little are the common instructors of youth, qualified to judge the capacities of those who are under their tutelage and care, that Fathom, by dint of his insinuating arts, made shift to pass upon the schoolmaster, as a lad of quick parts, in despite of a natural inaptitude to retain his lessons, which all his industry could never overcome. In order to remedy, or rather to cloak this defect in his understanding, he had always recourse to the friendship of the young count, who freely permitted him to transcribe his exercises, until a small accident happened, which had well-nigh put a stop to these instances of his generosity.—The adventure, inconsiderable as it is, we shall record, as the first overt-act of Ferdinand's true character, as well as an illustration of the opinion we have advanced, touching the blind and injudicious decisions of a right pedagogue.

Among other tasks imposed by the pedant, upon the form to which our two companions belonged, they were

one evening ordered to translate a chapter of Cæsar's commentaries. Accordingly the young count went to work, and performed the undertaking with great elegance and dispatch: Fathom having spent the night in more effeminate amusements, was next morning so much hurried for want of time, that in his transcription, he neglected to insert a few variations from the text; these being the terms on which he was allowed to use it: so that it was verbatim a copy of the original. As those exercises were always delivered in a heap, subscribed with the several names of the boys to whom they belonged; the schoolmaster chanced to peruse the version of Ferdinand, before he looked into any of the rest, and could not help bestowing upon it particular marks of approbation: the next that fell under his examination was that of the young count, when he immediately perceived the sameness, and far from imputing it to the true cause, upbraided him with having copied the exercise of our adventurer, and insisted upon chastising him upon the spot, for his want of application.

Had not the young gentleman thought his honour was concerned, he would have submitted to the punishment without murmuring; but he inherited from his parents the pride of two fierce nations, and being overwhelmed with reproaches, for that which he imagined, ought to have redounded to his glory, he could not brook the indignity, and boldly affirmed, that he himself was the original, to whom Ferdinand was beholden for his performance. The schoolmaster, nettled to find himself mistaken in his judgment, resolved that the count should have no cause to exult in the discovery he had made, and like a true flogger, actually whipt him for having allowed Fathom to copy his exercise. Nay, in the hope of vindi-

cating his own penetration, he took an opportunity of questioning Ferdinand in private, concerning the circumstances of the translation; and our hero perceiving his drift, gave him such artful and ambiguous answers, as persuaded him, that the young count had acted the part of a plagiary, and that the other had been restrained from doing himself justice, by the consideration of his own dependance.

This profound director did not fail, in honour of his own discernment, to whisper about the misrepresentation, as an instance of the young count's insolence, and Fathom's humility and good sense. The story was circulated among the servants, especially the maids belonging to the family, whose favour our hero had acquired by his engaging behaviour; and at length it reached the ears of his patron, who incensed at his son's presumption and inhospitality, called him to a severe account, when the young gentleman absolutely denied the truth of the allegation, and appealed to the evidence of Fathom himself. Our adventurer was accordingly summoned by the father, and encouraged to declare the truth, with an assurance of his constant protection; upon which, Ferdinand very wisely fell upon his knees, and while the tears gushed from his eyes, acquitted the young count of the imputation, and expressed his apprehension, that the report had been spread by some of his enemies, who wanted to prejudice him in the opinion of his patron.

The old gentleman was not satisfied of his son's integrity, by this declaration; being naturally of a generous disposition, highly prepossessed in favour of the poor orphan, and chagrined at the unpromising appearance of his heir, he suspected that Fathom was over-awed by the fear of giving offence, and that notwithstanding what he

had said, the case really stood as it had been represented. In this persuasion, he earnestly exhorted his son to resist and combat with any impulse he might feel within himself, tending to selfishness, fraud or imposition; to encourage every sentiment of candour and benevolence, and to behave with moderation and affability to all his fellow-creatures. He laid upon him strong injunctions, not without a mixture of threats, to consider Fathom as the object of his peculiar regard; to respect him as the son of the count's preserver, as a Briton, a stranger, and above all, an helpless orphan, to whom the rights of hospitality were doubly due.

Such admonitions were not lost upon the youth, who under the rough husk of his personal exhibition, possessed a large share of generous sensibility: without any formal professions to his father, he resolved to govern himself according to his remonstrances; and far from conceiving the least spark of animosity against Fathom, he looked upon the poor boy as the innocent cause of his disgrace, and redoubled his kindness towards him, that his honour might never again be called in question, upon the same subject. Nothing is more liable to misconstruction than an act of uncommon generosity; one half of the world mistake the motive, from want of ideas to conceive an instance of beneficence, that soars so high above the level of their own sentiments; and the rest suspect it of something sinister or selfish, from the suggestions of their own sordid and vicious inclinations. The young count subjected himself to such misinterpretation, among those who observed the increased warmth of civility and complaisance in his behaviour to Ferdinand: they ascribed it to his desire of still profiting by our adventurer's superior talents, by which alone they supposed him enabled to maintain

any degree of reputation at school; or to the fear of being convicted by him of some misdemeanour of which he knew himself guilty. These suspicions were not effaced by the conduct of Ferdinand, who, when examined on the subject, managed his answers in such a manner, as confirmed their conjectures, while he pretended to refute them, and at the same time acquired to himself credit for his extraordinary discretion and self-denial.

If he exhibited such a proof of sagacity in the twelfth year of his age, what might not be expected from his finesse, in the maturity of his faculties and experience? Thus secured in the good graces of the whole family, he saw the days of his puerility glide along in the most agreeable elapse of caresses and amusement. He never fairly plunged into the stream of school education; but, by floating on the surface, imbibed a small tincture of those different sciences, which his master pretended to teach; in short, he resembled those vagrant swallows that skim along the level of some pool or river, without venturing to wet one feather in their wings, except in the accidental pursuit of an inconsiderable fly. Yet, though his capacity or inclination was unsuited for studies of this kind, he did not fail to manifest a perfect genius in the acquisition of other more profitable arts. Over and above the accomplishments of address, for which he hath been already celebrated, he excelled all his fellows in his dexterity at fives and billiards; was altogether unrivalled in his skill at draughts and backgammon; began even at these years, to understand the moves and schemes of chess; and made himself a meer adept in the mystery of cards, which he learned in the course of his assiduities and attention to the females of the house.

CHAP. VI.

He meditates schemes of importance.

IT was in these parties, that he attracted the notice and friendship of his patron's daughter, a girl by two years older than himself, who was not insensible to his qualifications, and looked upon him with the most favourable eyes of prepossession. Whether or not he at this period of his life, began to project plans for availing himself of her susceptibility, is uncertain: but without all doubt, he cultivated her esteem with as obsequious and submissive attention, as if he had already formed the design which in his advanced age, he attempted to put in execution.

Divers circumstances conspired to promote him in the favour of this young lady; the greenness of his years, secured him from any suspicion of fallacious aim; so that he was indulged in frequent opportunities of conversing with his young mistress, whose parents encouraged this communication, by which they hoped she would improve in speaking the language of her father. Such connexions naturally produce intimacy and friendship. Fathom's person was agreeable, his talents calculated for the meridian of those parties, and his manners so engaging, that there would have been no just subject for wonder, had he made an impression upon the tender unexperienced heart of Mademoiselle de Melvil, whose beauty was not so attractive as to extinguish his hope, in raising up a number of formidable rivals; though her expectations of fortune were such as commonly lend additional lustre to personal merit.

All these considerations were so many steps towards the success of Ferdinand's pretensions; and though he cannot

be supposed to have perceived them at first, he in the sequel, seemed perfectly well apprized of his advantages, and used them to the full extent of his faculties. Observing that she delighted in music, he betook himself to the study of that art, and by dint of application and a tolerable ear, learned of himself to accompany her with a german flute, while she sung and played upon the harpsichord. The count seeing his inclination, and the progress he had made, resolved that his capacity should not be lost for want of cultivation; and accordingly provided him with a master, by whom he was instructed in the principles of the art, and soon became a proficient in playing upon the violin.

In the practice of these improvements and avocations, and in attendance upon his young master, whom he took care never to disoblige or neglect, he attained to the age of sixteen, without feeling the least abatement in the friendship and generosity of those upon whom he depended; but, on the contrary, receiving every day fresh marks of their bounty and regard. He had before this time, been smit with the ambition of making a conquest of the young lady's heart; and foresaw manifold advantages to himself, in becoming son in law to count Melvil, who, he never doubted, would soon be reconciled to the match, if once it could be effectuated without his knowledge. Altho' he thought he had great reason to believe that Mademoiselle looked upon him with an eye of peculiar favour, his disposition was happily tempered with an ingredient of caution, that hindered him from acting with precipitation, and he had discerned in the young lady's deportment certain indications of loftiness and pride, which kept him in the utmost vigilance of circumspection; for, he knew that by a premature declaration, he should run the risque

of forfeiting all the advantages he had gained, and blasting those expectations that now blossomed so gaily in his heart.

Restricted by these reflections, he acted at a wary distance, and determined to proceed by the method of sap, and summoning all his artifice and attractions to his aid, employed them under the insidious cover of profound respect, in order to undermine those bulwarks of haughtiness or discretion, which, otherwise, might have rendered his approaches to her impracticable. With a view to inhance the value of his company, and sound her sentiments at the same time, he became more reserved than usual, and seldomer engaged in her parties of music and cards; yet in the midst of his reserve he never failed in those demonstrations of reverence and regard, which he knew perfectly well how to express; but devised such excuses for his absence, as she could not help admitting. In consequence of his affected shyness, she more than once, gently chid him for his neglect and indifference, observing, with an ironical air, that he was now too much of a man to be entertained with such effeminate diversions; but her reproofs were pronounced with too much ease and good humour to be agreeable to our hero, who desired to see her ruffled and chagrined at his absence, and to hear himself rebuked with an angry affectation of disdain. This effort, therefore, he reinforced with the most captivating carriage he could assume, in those hours which he now so sparingly bestowed upon his mistress; he regaled her with all the entertaining stories he could learn or invent, particularly such as he thought would justify and recommend the levelling power of love, that knows no distinctions of fortune. He sung nothing but tender airs and passionate complaints, composed by desponding or des-

pairing swains; and to render his performances of this kind the more pathetic, interlarded them with some seasonable sighs, while the tears which he had ever at command, stood collected in either eye.

It was impossible for her to overlook such studied emotions; she in a jocose manner, taxed him with having lost his heart, rallied the excess of his passion, and in a merry strain undertook to be an advocate for his love. Her behaviour was still wide of his wish and expectation: he thought she would, in consequence of her discovery, have betrayed some interested symptom; that her face would have undergone some favourable suffusion; that her tongue would have faultered, her breast heaved, and her whole deportment betokened internal agitation and disorder; in which case, he meant to profit by the happy impression, and declare himself before she could possibly recollect the dictates of her pride. Baffled however in his endeavours, by the serenity of the young lady, which he still deemed equivocal, he had recourse to another experiment, by which he believed, he should make a discovery of her sentiments, beyond all possibility of doubt. One day, while he accompanied Mademoiselle in her exercises of music, he pretended all of a sudden, to be taken ill, and counterfeited a swoon in her apartment. Surprised at this accident, she screamed aloud, but far from running to his assistance, with the transports and distraction of a lover, she ordered her maid, who was present, to support his head, and went in person to call for more help: he was accordingly removed to his own chamber, where, willing to be still more certified of her inclinations, he prolonged the farce, and lay groaning under the pretence of a severe fever.

The whole family was alarmed upon this occasion; for

as we have already observed, he was an universal favourite. He was immediately visited by the old count and his lady, who expressed the utmost concern at his distemper, ordered him to be carefully attended, and sent for a physician, without loss of time. The young gentleman would scarce stir from his bed-side, where he ministred unto him with all the demonstrations of brotherly affection; and miss exhorted him to keep up his spirits, with many expressions of unreserved sympathy and regard: nevertheless, he saw nothing in her behaviour, but what might be naturally expected from common friendship, and a compassionate disposition, and was very much mortified at his disappointment.

Whether the miscarriage actually affected his constitution, or the doctor happened to be mistaken in his diagnostics, we shall not pretend to determine; but the patient was certainly treated Secundum Artem, and all his complaints in a little time realized; for the physician, like a true graduate, had an eye to the apothecary, in his prescriptions; and such was the concern and scrupulous care with which our hero was attended, that the orders of the faculty were performed with the utmost punctuality. He was blooded, vomited, purged and blistered in the usual forms, (for the physicians of Hungary are generally as well skilled in the arts of their occupation, as any other leeches under the sun) and swallowed a whole dispensary of bolusses, draughts and apozems, by which means he became fairly delirious in three days, and so untractable, that he could be no longer managed according to rule; otherwise in all likelihood, the world would never have enjoyed the benefit of these adventures. In short, his constitution, though unable to cope with two such formidable antagonists, as the doctor, and the disease he had conjured

up, was no sooner rid of the one, than it easily got the better of the other, and though Ferdinand after all, found his grand aim unaccomplished, his malady was productive of a consequence, which though he had not foreseen it, he did not fail to convert to his own use and advantage.

CHAP. VII.

Engages in partnership with a female associate, in order to put his talents in action.

WHILE he displayed his qualifications in order to intrap the heart of his young mistress, he had unwittingly enslaved the affections of her maid. This attendant was also a favourite of the young lady, and though her senior by two or three good years at least, unquestionably her superior in point of personal beauty; she moreover possessed a good stock of cunning and discernment, and was furnished by nature with a very amorous complexion. These circumstances being premised, the reader will not be surprised to find her smitten by those uncommon qualifications which we have celebrated in young Fathom. She had in good sooth, long sighed in secret, under the powerful influence of his charms, and practised upon him all those little arts, by which a woman strives to attract the admiration and ensnare the heart of a man she loves; but, all his faculties were employed upon the plan which he had already projected; that was the goal of his whole attention, to which all his measures tended; and whether or not he perceived the impression he had made upon Teresa, he never gave her the least reason to believe he was conscious of his victory, until he found himself baffled

in his design upon the heart of her mistress. She therefore persevered in her distant attempts to allure him, with the usual coquetries of dress and address, and in the sweet hope of profiting by his susceptibility, made shift to suppress her feelings, and keep her passion within bounds; until his supposed danger alarmed her fears, and raised such a tumult within her breast, that she could no longer conceal her love, but gave a loose to her sorrow in the most immoderate expressions of anguish and affliction, and while his delirium lasted, behaved with all the agitation of a despairing shepherdess.

Ferdinand was, or pretended to be, the last person in the family, who understood the situation of her thoughts; when he perceived her passion, he entered into deliberation with himself, and tasked his reflexion and foresight, in order to discover how best he might convert this conquest to his own advantage. Here, then, that we may neglect no opportunity of doing justice to our hero, it will be proper to observe, that howsoever unapt his understanding might be to receive and retain the useful culture of the schools, he was naturally a genius self-taught, in point of sagacity and invention. He dived into the characters of mankind, with a penetration peculiar to himself, and had he been admitted as a pupil in any political academy, would have certainly become one of the ablest statesmen in Europe.

Having revolved all the probable consequences of such a connexion, he determined to prosecute an amour with the lady whose affection he had subdued; because he hoped to interest her as an auxiliary in his grand scheme upon Mademoiselle, which he did not as yet think proper to lay aside; for, he was not more ambitious in the plan, than indefatigable in the prosecution of it. He knew it

would be impossible to execute his aims upon the count's daughter, under the eye of Teresa, whose natural discernment would be whetted with jealousy, and who would watch his conduct, and thwart his progress with all the vigilance and spite of a slighted maiden. On the other hand, he did not doubt of being able to bring her over to his interest, by the influence he had already gained, or might afterwards acquire over her passions; in which case, she would effectually espouse his cause, and employ her good offices with her mistress, in his behalf: besides, he was induced by another motive, which though secondary, did not fail in this case to have an effect upon his determination. He looked upon Teresa with the eyes of appetite, which he longed to gratify: for he was not at all dead to the instigations of the flesh, though he had philosophy enough to resist them, when he thought they interfered with his interest. Here the case was quite different: his desire happened to be upon the side of his advantage, and therefore, resolving to indulge it, he no sooner found himself in a condition to manage such an adventure, than he began to make gradual advances in point of warmth and particular complacency to the love-sick maid.

He first of all, thanked her in the most grateful terms, for the concern she had manifested at his distemper, and the kind services he had received from her, during the course of it; he treated her upon all occasions, with unusual affability and regard, assiduously courted her acquaintance and conversation, and contracted an intimacy that, in a little time, produced a declaration of love. Although her heart was too much intendered to hold out against all the forms of assault, far from yielding at discretion, she stood upon honourable terms, with great obstinacy of punctilio, and while she owned he was master of her

inclinations, gave him to understand with a peremptory and resolute air, that he should never make a conquest of her virtue: observing, that if the passion he professed was genuine, he would not scruple to give such a proof of it, as would at once convince her of his sincerity; and that he could have no just cause to refuse her that satisfaction, she being his equal in point of birth and situation: for, if he was the companion and favourite of the young count, she was the friend and confidante of Mademoiselle.

He acknowledged the strength of her argument, and that her condescension was greater than his deserts; but objected against the proposal, as infinitely prejudicial to the fortunes of them both. He represented the state of dependance in which they mutually stood; their utter incapacity to support one another, under the consequences of a precipitate match, clandestinely made, without the consent and concurrence of their patrons: he displayed, with great eloquence, all those gay expectations they had reason to entertain, from that eminent degree of favour which they had already secured in the family; and set forth, in the most alluring colours, those enchanting scenes of pleasures they might enjoy, in each other, without that disagreeable consciousness of a nuptial chain, provided she would be his associate in the execution of a plan, which he had projected for their reciprocal convenience.

Having thus inflamed her love of pleasure and curiosity, he, with great caution, hinted his design upon the young lady's fortune, and perceiving her listening with the most greedy attention, and perfectly ripe for the conspiracy, he disclosed his intention at full length, assuring her, with the most solemn protestations of love and attachment, that could he once make himself legal possessor

of an estate which Mademoiselle inherited, by the will of a deceased aunt, his dear Teresa should reap the happy fruits of his affluence; and wholly engross his time and attention.

Such a base declaration our hero would not have ventured to make, had he not implicitly believed the damsel was as great a latitudinarian as himself in point of morals and principle; and been well assured that though he should be mistaken in her way of thinking, so far as to be threatned with a detection of his purpose, he would always have it in his power to refute her accusation as meer calumny, by the character he had hitherto maintained, and the circumspection of his future conduct.

He seldom or never erred in his observations on the human heart. Teresa, instead of disapproving, relished the plan in general, with demonstrations of singular satisfaction: she, at once conceived all the advantageous consequences of such a scheme, and perceived in it, only one flaw, which, however, she did not think incurable. This defect was no other than a sufficient bond of union, by which they might be effectually tied down to their mutual interest. She foresaw that in case Ferdinand should obtain possession of the prize, he might, with great ease, deny their contract, and disavow her claim of participation. She therefore demanded security, and proposed as a preliminary of the agreement, that he should privately take her to wife, with a view to dispel all her apprehensions of his inconstancy or deceit, as such a previous engagement would be a check upon his behaviour, and keep him strictly to the letter of their contract.

He could not help subscribing to the righteousness of this proposal, which, nevertheless, he would have willingly waved, on the supposition that they could not pos-

sibly be joined in the bands of wedlock, with such secrecy as the nature of the case absolutely required. This would have been a difficulty soon removed, had the scene of the transaction been laid in the metropolis of England, where passengers are plied in the streets by clergymen, who prostitute their characters and consciences for hire, in defiance of all decency and law; but in the kingdom of Hungary, ecclesiastics are more scrupulous in the exercise of their function, and the objection was, or supposed to be altogether insurmountable; so that they were fain to have recourse to an expedient, with which, after some hesitation, our she-adventurer was satisfied. They joined hands in the sight of Heaven, which they called to witness, and to judge the sincerity of their vows, and engaged in a voluntary oath to confirm their union by the sanction of the church, whenever a convenient opportunity for so doing, should occur.

The scruples of Teresa being thus removed, she admitted Ferdinand to the privileges of a husband, which he enjoyed in stolen interviews; and readily undertook to exert her whole power in promoting his suit with her young mistress, because she now considered his interest as inseparably connected with her own. Surely nothing could be more absurd or preposterous, than the articles of this covenant, which she insisted upon with such inflexibility. How could she suppose, that her pretended lover would be restrained by an oath, when the very occasion of incurring it, was an intention to act in violation of all laws human and divine; and yet such ridiculous conjuration is commonly the cement of every conspiracy, how dark, how treacherous, how impious soever it may be. A certain sign that there are some remains of religion left in the human mind, even after every moral sentiment hath abandoned

it; and that the most execrable ruffian finds means to quiet the suggestions of his conscience, by some reversionary hope of heaven's forgiveness.

CHAP. VIII.

Their first attempt; with a digression which some Readers may think impertinent.

BE this as it will, our lovers, though real voluptuaries, amidst the first transports of their enjoyment, did not neglect the great political aim of their conjunction. Teresa's bed-chamber, to which our hero constantly repaired at midnight, was the scene of their deliberations, and there it was determined, that the damsel, in order to avoid suspicion, should feign herself irritated at the indifference of Ferdinand, her passion for whom, was by this time no secret in the family; and that with a view to countenance this affectation, he should upon all occasions treat her with an air of loftiness and disdain.

So screened from all imputation of fraud, she was furnished by him with artful instructions, how to sound the inclinations of her young mistress; how to recommend his person and qualifications by the sure methods of contradiction, comparison, revilings and reproach; how to watch the paroxysms of her disposition, inflame her passions, and improve, for his advantage, those moments of frailty, from which no woman is exempted. In short, this consummate politician taught his agent to poison the young lady's mind with insidious conversation, tending to inspire her with the love of guilty pleasure, to debauch her sentiments, and confound her ideas of dignity and virtue. After all, the task is not difficult to lead the unpractised heart astray, by dint of those opportunities her

seducer possessed. The seeds of insinuation seasonably sown upon the warm, luxuriant soil of youth, could hardly fail of shooting up into such intemperate desires as he wanted to produce; especially when cultured and cherished in her unguarded hours, by that stimulating discourse which familiarity admits, and the looser passions ingrafted in every breast, are apt to relish and excuse.

Fathom had previously reconnoitred the ground, and discovered some marks of inflammability in Mademoiselle's constitution; her beauty was not such as to engage her in those gaieties of amusement, which could flatter her vanity, and dissipate her ideas; and she was of an age, when the little loves and young desires take possession of the fancy; he therefore concluded, that she had the more leisure to indulge those inticing images of pleasure that youth never fails to create, particularly in those who, like her, were addicted to solitude and study.

Teresa, full fraught with the wily injunctions of her confederate, took the field, and opened the campaign with such remarkable sourness in her aspect, when Ferdinand appeared, that her young lady could not help taking notice of her affected chagrin, and asked the reason of such apparent alteration in her way of thinking. Prepared for this question, the other replied in a manner calculated for giving Mademoiselle to understand, that whatever impressions Ferdinand might have formerly made on her heart, they were now altogether effaced by the pride and insolence with which he had received her advances; and that her breast now glowed with all the revenge of a slighted lover.

To evince the sincerity of this declaration, she bitterly inveighed against him, and even affected to depreciate those talents, in which she knew his chief merit to consist;

hoping by these means to interest Mademoiselle's candour in his defence. So far the train succeeded: that young lady's natural love for truth was offended at the calumnies that were vented against Ferdinand in his absence. She chid her woman for the rancour of her remarks, and undertook to refute the articles of his dispraise: Teresa supported her own assertions with great obstinacy, and a dispute ensued, in which her mistress was heated into some extravagant commendations of our adventurer.

His supposed enemy did not fail to make a report of her success, and to magnify every advantage they had gained; believing in good earnest, that her lady's warmth was the effect of a real passion for the fortunate Mr. Fathom: but he himself viewed the adventure in a different light; and rightly imputed the violence of Mademoiselle's behaviour to the contradiction she had sustained from her maid; or to the fire of her natural generosity, glowing in behalf of innocence traduced. Nevertheless, he was perfectly well pleased with the nature of the contest; because, in the course of such debates, he foresaw that he should become habitually her hero, and that, in time, she would actually believe those exaggerations of his merit, which she herself had feigned for the honour of her own arguments.

This presage, founded upon that principle of self-respect, without which no individual exists, may certainly be justified by manifold occurrences in life: we ourselves have known a very pregnant example, which we shall relate, for the emolument of the reader. A certain needy author having found means to present a manuscript to one of those sons of fortune, who are dignified with the appellation of patrons, instead of reaping that applause, and advantage, with which he had regaled his fancy, had

the mortification to find his performance treated with infinite irreverence and contempt: and in high dudgeon and disappointment appealed to the judgment of another critic, who he knew, had no veneration for the first.

This common consolation, to which all baffled authors have recourse, was productive of very happy consequences to our bard: for though the opinions of both judges, concerning the piece, were altogether the same, the latter, either out of compassion to the appellant, or desire of rendering his rival ridiculous in the eye of taste, undertook to repair the misfortune, and in this manner executed the plan, in a meeting of literati, to which both these wits belonged; he who had espoused the poet's cause, having previously desired another member to bring his composition on the carpet, no sooner heard it mentioned, than he began to censure it with flagrant marks of scorn, and with an ironical air looking at its first condemner, observed that he must be furiously infected with the rage of patronizing, who could take such a deplorable performance into his protection: the sarcasm took effect.

The person against whom it was levelled, taking umbrage at his presumption, assumed an aspect of disdain, and replied with great animosity, that nothing was more easily supported than the character of a Zoilus, because no production was altogether free from blemishes, and any man might pronounce against any piece by the lump, without interesting his own discernment: but to perceive the beauties of a work, it was requisite to have learning, judgment and taste; and therefore he did not wonder that the gentleman had overlooked a great many in the composition which he so contemptuously decried. A rejoinder succeeded this reply, and produced a long train of altercation, in which the gentleman who had formerly treated

the book with such disrespect, now professed himself its passionate admirer, and held forth in praise of it with great warmth and elocution.

Not contented with having exhibited this instance of regard, he next morning sent a message to the owner, importing that he had but superficially glanced over the manuscript, and desiring the favour of perusing it a second time; being indulged in this request, he recommended it in terms of rapture, to all his friends and dependants, and by dint of unwearied sollicitation, procured a very ample subscription for the author.

But, to resume the thread of our story: Teresa's practices were not confined to simple defamation: her reproaches were contrived so as to imply some intelligence in favour of the person she reviled. In exemplifying his pertness and arrogance, she repeated his witty repartee; on pretence of blaming his ferocity, she recounted proofs of his spirit and prowess; and in explaining the source of his vanity, gave her mistress to understand, that a certain young lady of fashion was said to be enamoured of his person. Nor did this well-instructed understrapper omit those other parts of her cue, which the principal judged necessary for the furtherance of his scheme. Her conversation became less guarded, and took a freer turn than usual: she seized all opportunities of introducing little amorous stories, the greatest part of which were invented for the purposes of warming her passions, and lowering the price of chastity in her esteem; for, she represented all the young lady's cotemporaries in point of age and situation, as so many sensualists, who without scruple indulged themselves in the stolen pleasures of youth.

Mean while Ferdinand seconded these endeavours with his whole industry and address: he redoubled, if possible,

his deference and respect, wheted his assiduity to the keenest edge of attention; and in short, regulated his dress, conversation and deportment, according to the fancy, turn, and prevailing humour of his young mistress. He moreover attempted to profit by her curiosity, which he knew to be truly feminine, and having culled from the library of his patron, certain dangerous books, calculated to debauch the minds of young people, left them occasionally upon the table in his apartment, after having directed Teresa to pick them up, as if by accident, in his absence, and carry them off for the entertainment of Mademoiselle; nay, this crafty projector found means to furnish his associate with some mischievous preparations, which were mingled in her chocolate, tea or coffee, as provocations to warm her constitution: yet, all these machinations, ingenious as they were, failed, not only in fulfilling their aim, but even in shaking the foundations of her virtue or pride, which stood their assaults, unmoved, like a strong tower built upon a rock, impregnable to all the tempestuous blasts of heaven.

Not but that the conspirators were more than once mistaken in the effects of their artifices, and disposed to applaud themselves on the progress they had made. When at any time she expressed a desire to examine those performances which were laid before her as snares to entrap her chastity, they attributed that, which was no other than curiosity, to a looseness of sentiment; and when she discovered no aversion to hear those anecdotes concerning the frailty of her neighbours, they imputed to abatement of chastity, that satisfaction which was the result of self-congratulation on her own superior virtue.

So far did the treacherous accomplice of Fathom presume upon these misconstructions, that she at length

divested her tongue of all restraint, and behaved in such a manner, that the young lady confounded and incensed at her indecency and impudence, rebuked her with great severity, and commanded her to reform her discourse, on pain of being dismissed with disgrace from her service.

CHAP. IX.

The confederates change their battery; and atchieve a remarkable adventure.

THUNDERSTRUCK at this disappointment, the confederates held a council, in order to deliberate upon the next measures that should be taken; and Ferdinand, for the present, despairing of accomplishing his grand aim, resolved to profit in another manner, by the conveniency of his situation. He represented to his helpmate, that it would be prudent for them to make hay while the sun shone, as their connexion might be sooner or later discovered, and an end put to all those opportunities which they now so happily enjoyed. All principles of morality had been already excluded from their former plan; consesequently, he found it an easy task to interest Teresa in any other scheme tending to their mutual advantage, howsoever wicked and perfidious it might be. He therefore, persuaded her to be his auxiliary in defrauding Mademoiselle at play, and gave her suitable directions for that purpose; and even tutored her how to abuse the trust reposed in her, by embezzling the young lady's effects, without incurring the suspicion of dishonesty.

On the supposition that every servant in the house, was not able to resist such temptation, the purse of her mistress (to which the maid had always access) was dropped

in a passage, which the domestics had occasion to frequent, and Fathom posted himself in a convenient place, in order to observe the effect of his stratagem. Here he was not disappointed in his conjecture. The first person who chanced to pass that way, was one of the chambermaids, with whom Teresa had lived, for some time, in a state of inveterate enmity, because the wench had failed in that homage and respect which was paid to her by the rest of the servants.

Ferdinand had in his heart espoused the quarrel of his associate, and longed for an occasion to deliver her from the malicious observance of such an antagonist; when he therefore, saw her approach, his heart throbbed with joyful expectations; but, when she snatched up the purse, and thrust it in her bosom, with all the eagerness and confusion of one determined to appropriate the windfall to her own use, his transports were altogether unspeakable. He traced her to her own apartment, whither she immediately retreated with great trepidation, and then communicated the discovery to Teresa, together with instructions how to behave in the sequel.

In conformity with these lessons, she took the first opportunity of going to Mademoiselle, and demanding money for some necessary expence, that the loss might be known, before the finder could have leisure to make any fresh conveyance of the prize; and in the mean time, Ferdinand kept a strict eye upon the motions of the chambermaid. The young lady having rummaged her pockets in vain, expressed some surprise at the loss of her purse, upon which her attendant gave indications of extreme amazement and concern; she said, it could not possibly be lost; intreated her to search her escrutore, while she herself ran about the room, prying into every corner, with all the symptoms of fear and distraction. Having made this

unsuccessful inquiry, she pretended to shed a flood of tears, bewailing her own fate, in being near the person of any lady, who met with such a misfortune, by which, she observed, her character might be called in question: she produced her own keys, and begged upon her knees, that her chamber and boxes might be searched without delay.

In a word, she demeaned herself so artfully, upon this occasion, that her mistress, who never entertained the least doubt of her integrity, now looked upon her as a miracle of fidelity and attachment, and was at infinite pains to console her for the accident which had happened; protesting that for her own part, the loss of the money should never affect her with a moment's uneasiness, if she could retrieve a certain medal which she had long kept in her purse, as a remembrance of her deceased aunt, from whom she received it in a present.

Fathom entered accidentally in the midst of this well-acted scene, and perceiving the agitation of the maid, and the concern of the mistress, desired, in a respectful manner, to know the cause of their disorder. Before the young lady had time to make him acquainted with the circumstances of the case, his accomplice exclaimed in an affected passion, 'Mr. Fathom, my lady has lost her purse; and as no persons in the family are so much about her, as you and I, you must give me leave in my own justification, to insist upon Mademoiselle's ordering the apartments of us both to be searched without loss of time: here are my pockets and my keys, and you cannot scruple to give her the same satisfaction; for innocence has nothing to fear.'

Miss Melvile reprimanded her sharply for her unmannerly zeal; and Ferdinand eying her with a look of disdain, 'Madam, said he, I approve of your proposal; but before I undergo such mortification, I would advise

Mademoiselle to subject the two chambermaids to such inquiry: as they also have access to the apartments, and are, I apprehend, as likely as you or I, to behave in such a scandalous manner.'

The young lady declared that she was too well satisfied of Teresa's honesty and Ferdinand's honour, to harbour the least suspicion of either, and that she would sooner die than disgrace them so far as to comply with the proposal the former had made; but as she saw no reason for exempting the inferior servants from that examination, which Fathom advised, she would forthwith put it in execution. The chambermaids being accordingly summoned, she calmly asked if either of them had accidentally found the purse she had dropped, and both replying in the negative, she assumed an air of severity and determination, and demanding their keys, threatned to examine their trunks on the instant.

The guilty Abigail, who, though an Hungarian, was not inferior, in point of effrontery, to any one of the sisterhood in England, no sooner heard this menace, than she affected an air of affronted innocence, thanked God she had lived in many reputable families, and been trusted with untold gold; but was never before suspected of theft; that the other maid might do so as she should think proper, and be mean-spirited enough to let her things be tumbled topsy-turvy and exposed; but, for her own part, if she should be used in that inhuman and disgraceful manner, she would not stay another hour in the house; and in conclusion said, that Mademoiselle had more reason to look sharp after those who enjoyed the greatest share of her favour, than believe their malicious insinuations against innocent people whom they were well known to hate and defame.

This declaration implying an hint to the prejudice of Teresa, far from diverting miss Melvile from her purpose, served only to inhance the character of the accused in her opinion, and to confirm her suspicion of the accuser, of whom she again demanded her keys, protesting that should she prove refractory, the count himself should take cognizance of the affair, whereas if she would deal ingenuously, she should have no cause to repent of her confession. So saying, she desired our adventurer to take the trouble of calling up some of the men servants; upon which the conscious criminal began to tremble, and falling upon her knees, acknowledged her guilt, and implored the forgiveness of her young mistress.

Teresa seizing this occasion to signalize her generosity, joined in the request, and the offender was pardoned, after having restored the purse, and promised in the sight of Heaven, that the devil should never again intice her to the commission of such a crime. This adventure fully answered all the purposes of our politician; it established the opinion of his fellow-labourer's virtue, beyond the power of accident or information to shake, and set up a false beacon to mislead the sentiments of Mademoiselle, in case she should for the future meet with the like misfortune.

CHAP. X.

They proceed to levy contributions with great success, until our hero sets out with the young count for Vienna, where he enters into league with another adventurer.

UNDER this secure cover, Teresa levied contributions upon her mistress with great success. Some trinket was missing every day; the young lady's patience began to fail, the faithful attendant was overwhelmed with con-

sternation, and with the appearance of extreme chagrin, demanded her dismission, affirming that these things were certainly effected by some person in the family, with a view to murthering her precious reputation. Miss Melvile, not without difficulty, quieted her vexation with assurances of inviolable confidence and esteem, until a pair of diamond ear-rings vanished, when Teresa could no longer keep her affliction within bounds. Indeed this was an event of more consequence, than all the rest which had happened, for the jewels were valued at five hundred florins.

Mademoiselle was accordingly alarmed to such a degree, that she made her mother acquainted with her loss, and that good lady, who was an excellent œconomist, did not fail to give indications of extraordinary concern. She asked, if her daughter had reason to suspect any indidividual in the family, and if she was perfectly confident of her own woman's integrity: upon which Mademoiselle, with many encomiums on the fidelity and attachment of Teresa, recounted the adventure of the chambermaid, who immediately underwent a strict enquiry, and was even committed to prison, on the strength of her former misdemeanour. Our adventurer's mate insisted upon undergoing the same tryal with the rest of the domesticks, and as usual comprehended Fathom in her insinuations; while he seconded the proposal, and privately counselled the old lady to introduce Teresa to the magistrate of the place. By these pre-concerted recriminations, they escaped all suspicion of collusion. After a fruitless inquiry, the prisoner was discharged from her confinement, and turned out of the service of the count, in whose private opinion the character of no person suffered so much, as that of his own son, whom he suspected of having embezzled the jewels,

for the use of a certain Inamorata, who, at that time, was said to have captivated his affections.

The old gentleman felt upon this occasion, all that internal anguish which a man of honour may be supposed to suffer, on account of a son's degeneracy; and without divulging his sentiments, or even hinting his suspicions to the youth himself, determined to detach him at once from such dangerous connexions, by sending him forthwith to Vienna, on pretence of finishing his exercises at the academy, aud ushering him into acquaintance with the great world. Though he would not be thought by the young gentleman himself, to harbour the least doubt of his morals, he did not scruple to unbosom himself on that subject to Ferdinand, whose sagacity and virtue he held in great veneration. This indulgent patron, expressed himself in the most pathetic terms, on the untoward disposition of his son; he told Fathom that he should accompany Renaldo (that was the youth's name) not only as a companion, but a preceptor and pattern; conjured him to assist his tutor in superintending his conduct, and to reinforce the governor's precepts, by his own example; to inculcate upon him, the most delicate punctilio's of honour, and decoy him into extravagance, rather than leave the least illiberal sentiment in his heart.

Our crafty adventurer, with demonstrations of the utmost sensibility, acknowledged the great goodness of the count in reposing such confidence in his integrity; which, as he observed, none but the worst of villians could abuse; and fervently wished that he might no longer exist, than he should continue to remember and resent the obligations he owed to his kind benefactor. While preparations were making for their departure, our hero held a council with his associate, whom he enriched with many sage instructions touching her future operations; he at

the same time disburthened her of all or the greatest part of the spoils she had won, and after having received divers marks of bounty from the count and his lady, together with a purse from his young mistress, he set out for Vienna in the eighteenth year of his age, with Renaldo and his governor, who were provided with letters of recommendation to some of the count's friends belonging to the imperial court.

Such a favourable introduction could not fail of being advantageous to a youth of Ferdinand's specious accomplishments; for he was considered as the young count's companion, admitted into his parties, and included in all the entertainments to which Renaldo was invited. He soon distinguished himself by his activity and address, in the course of those exercises that were taught at the academy of which he was pupil; his manners were so engaging as to attract the acquaintance of his fellow-students, and his conversation being sprightly and inoffensive, grew into very great request; in a word, he and the young count formed a remarkable contrast, which in the eye of the world, redounded to his advantage.

They were certainly, in all respects, the reverse of each other. Renaldo, under a total defect of exterior cultivation, possessed a most excellent understanding, with every virtue that dignifies the human heart; while the other, beneath a most agreeable outside, with an inaptitude and aversion to letters, concealed an amazing fund of villainy and ingratitude. Hitherto, his observation had been confined to a narrow sphere, and his reflections, though surprizingly just and acute, had not attained to that maturity, which age and experience give: but now, his perceptions began to be more distinct, and extended to a thousand objects which had never before come under his cognizance.

He had formerly imagined, but was now fully persuad-

ed, that the sons of men preyed upon one another, and such was the end and condition of their being. Among the principal figures of life, he observed few or no characters that did not bear a strong analogy to the savage tyrants of the wood. One resembled a tyger in fury and rapaciousness; a second prowled about like an hungry wolf, seeking whom he might devour; a third acted the part of a jackall, in beating the bush for game to his voracious employer; and a fourth imitated the wily fox, in practising a thousand crafty ambuscades for the destruction of the ignorant and and unwary. The last was the department of life for which he found himself best qualified, by nature and inclination, and he accordingly resolved that his talent should not rust in his possession. He was already pretty well versed in all the sciences of play; but, he had every day, occasion to see these arts carried to such a surprising pitch of finesse and dexterity, as discouraged him from building his schemes on that foundation.

He therefore determined to fascinate the judgment, rather than the eyes of his fellow-creatures, by a continual exercise of that gift of deceiving, with which he knew himself endued to an unrivalled degree; and to acquire unbounded influence with those who might be subservient to his interest, by an assiduous application to their prevailing passions. Not that play was altogether left out in the projection of his œconomy: though he engaged himself very little in the executive part of gaming, he had not been long in Vienna, when he entered into league with a genius of that kind, whom he distinguished among the pupils of the academy, and who indeed, had taken up his habitation in that place, with a view to pillage the provincials on their first arrival in town, before they could be armed with proper circumspection to preserve their money, or have time to dispose of it in any other shape.

Similar characters naturally attract each other, and people of our hero's principles are, of all others, the most apt to distinguish their own likeness wheresoever it occurs; because they always keep the faculty of discerning in full exertion. It was in consequence of this mutual alertness, that Ferdinand and the stranger, who was a native of Tyrol, perceived themselves reflected in the dispositions of each other, and immediately entered into an offensive and defensive alliance: our adventurer undertaking for the articles of intelligence, countenance and counsel; and his associate charging himself with the risque of execution.

CHAP. XI.

Fathom makes various efforts in the world of gallantry.

THUS connected they began to hunt in couples; and Fathom in order to profit by the alliance, with a good grace, contrived a small scheme that succeeded to his wish. Renaldo being one night intoxicated in the course of a merry-making with his fellow pupils, from which Fathom had purposely absented himself, was by the Tyroleze so artfully provoked to play, that he could not resist the temptation, but engaged at pass-dice with that fell adversary, who in less than an hour, stripped him of a pretty round sum. Next day, when the young gentleman recovered the use of his reflection, he was sensibly chagrin'd at the folly and precipitation of his own conduct, an account of which he communicated in confidence to our hero; with demonstrations of infinite shame and concern.

Ferdinand having moralized upon the subject with great sagacity, and sharply inveighed against the Tyroleze, for the unfair advantage he had taken, retired to his closet and wrote the following billet, which was immediately sent to his ally.

"The obligations I owe, and the attachments I feel to the count de Melvile, will not suffer me to be an idle spectator of the wrongs offered to his son, in the dishonourable use, I understand, you made last night of his unguarded hours: I therefore insist upon your making immediate restitution of the booty which you so unjustly got; otherwise I expect you will meet me upon the ramparts, near the bastion de la Port-Neuve, to-morrow morning at daybreak, in order to justify with your sword, the finesse you have practised upon the friend of

"FERDINAND de FATHOM."

The gamester no sooner received this intimation, than according to the plan which had been preconcerted betwixt the author and him, he went to the apartment of Renaldo, and presenting the sum of money which he had defrauded him of, the preceding night, told him with a stern countenance, that though it was a just acquisition, he scorned to avail himself of his good fortune against any person who entertained the smallest doubt of his honour.

The young count, surprized at this address, rejected his offer with disdain, and desired to know the meaning of such an unexpected declaration. Upon which, the other produced Ferdinand's billet, and threatned in very high terms, to meet the stripling according to his invitation, and chastise him severely for his presumption. The consequence of this explanation is obvious. Renaldo imputing the officiousness of Fathom to the zeal of his friendship, interposed in the quarrel, which was amicably compromised, not a little to the honour of our adventurer, who thus obtained an opportunity of displaying his courage and integrity, without the least hazard to his person; while at the same time, his confederate recommended

himself to the esteem of the young count, by his spirited behaviour on this occasion; so that Renaldo being less shy of his company for the future, the Tyroleze had the fairer opportunities to prosecute his designs upon the young gentleman's purse.

It would be almost superfluous to say that these were not neglected. The son of count Melvile was not deficient in point of penetration; but his sole study was at that time engrossed by the care of his education; and he had sometimes recourse to play, as to an amusement by which he sought to unbend the severity of his attention: no wonder then, that he fell a prey to an artful gamester, who had been regularly trained to the profession, and made it the sole study of his life; especially as the Hungarian was remarkable for a warmth of temper, which a knight of the post always knows how to manage for his own advantage.

In the course of these operations, Fathom was a very useful correspondent; he instructed the Tyroleze in the peculiarities of Renaldo's disposition, and made him acquainted with the proper seasons for profiting by his dexterity. Ferdinand, for example, who by the authority derived to him from the injunctions of the old count, sometimes took upon himself the office of an adviser, cunningly chose to counsel the son, at those conjunctures, when he knew him least able to bear such expostulation. Advice improperly administered, generally acts in diametrical opposition to the purpose for which it is supposed to be given: at least this was the case with the young gentleman, who inflamed by the reproof of such a tutor, used to obey the dictates of his resentment, in an immediate repetition of that conduct which our adventurer had taken the liberty to disapprove; and the gamester was always at hand, to minister unto his indignation. By these

means he was disencumbered of divers considerable remittances, with which his father chearfully supplied him, on the supposition that they were spent with taste and liberality, under the direction of our adventurer.

But Ferdinand's views were not confined to the narrow field of this alliance: he attempted divers enterprizes in the world of gallantry, conscious of his own personal qualifications, and never doubting that he could insinuate himself into the good graces of some married lady about court, or lay an opulent dowager under contribution. But he met with an obstacle in his endeavours of this kind, which all his art was unable to surmount. This was no other than the obscurity of his birth, and the want of a title, without which no person in that country lays claim to the privileges of a gentleman. Had he foreseen this inconvenience, he might have made shift to obviate the consequences, by obtaining permission to appear in the character of the count's kinsman: though, in all probability, such an expedient would not have been extremely agreeable to the old gentleman, who was very tenacious of the honour of his family: nevertheless, his generosity might have been prevailed upon, to indulge Fathom with such a pretext, in consideration of the youth's supposed attachment, and the obligations for which he deemed himself indebted to his deceased mother.

True it is, Ferdinand, upon his first arrival at Vienna, had been admitted into fashionable company, on the footing of Renaldo's companion, because no body suspected the defect of his pedigree; and even after a report had been circulated to the prejudice of his extraction, by the industry of a lacquey who attended the young count, there were not wanting many young people of distinction, who still favoured him with their countenance and cor-

respondence: but, he was no longer invited to private families, in which only he could expect to profit by his address among the ladies, and had the mortification of finding himself frequently excepted from parties which were expressly calculated for the entertainment of the young count. Luckily, his spirit was so pliant as to sustain these slights, without being much dejected: instead of repining at the loss of that respect which had been paid to him at first, he endeavoured with all his might, to preserve the little that still remained, and resolved to translate into an humbler sphere, that gallantry which he had no longer opportunities of displaying in the world of rank and fashion.

CHAP. XII.

He effects a lodgment in the house of a rich Jeweller.

IN consequence of this determination, he to the uttermost exerted his good humour among the few friends of consequence his fortune had left, and even carried his complaisance so far, as to become the humble servant of their pleasures; while he attempted to extend his acquaintance in an inferior path of life, where he thought his talents would shine more conspicuous than at the assemblies of the great, and conduce more effectually to the interest of all his designs. Nor did he find himself disappointed in that expectation, sanguine as it was. He soon found means to be introduced to the house of a wealthy bourgeois, where every individual was charmed with his easy air and extraordinary qualifications. He accommodated himself surprisingly to the humours of the whole family; smoaked tobacco, swallowed wine and discoursed

of stones with the husband, who was a rich jeweller; sacrificed himself to the pride and loquacity of the wife, and played upon the violin, and sung alternately, for the amusement of his only daughter, a buxom lass, nearly of his own age, the fruit of a former marriage.

It was not long before Ferdinand had reason to congratulate himself on the footing he had gained in this society. He had expected to find, and in a little time actually discovered that mutual jealousy and rancour, which almost always subsist between a daughter and her stepdame, inflamed with all the virulence of female emulation; for the disparity in their ages, served only to render them the more inveterate rivals in the desire of captivating the other sex. Our adventurer having deliberated upon the means of converting this animosity to his own advantage, saw no method for this purpose so feasible, as that of making his approaches to the hearts of both, by ministring to each in private, food for their reciprocal envy and malevolence: because he well knew that no road lies so direct and open to a woman's heart, as that of gratifying her passions of vanity and resentment.

When he had an opportunity of being particular with the mother, he expressed his concern for having unwittingly incurred the displeasure of Mademoiselle, which, he observed, was obvious in every circumstance of her behaviour towards him; protesting he was utterly innocent of all intention of offending her; and that he could not account for his disgrace, any other way, than by supposing she took umbrage at the direction of his chief regards towards her mother-in-law, which, he owned, was altogether involuntary, being wholly influenced by that lady's superior charms and politeness.

Such a declaration was perfectly well calculated for the

meridian of a dame like her, who with all the intoxication of unenlightened pride, and an increased appetite for pleasure, had begun to find herself neglected, and even to believe that her attractions were actually in the wane. She very graciously consoled our gallant for the mishap of which he complained; representing Wilhelmina (that was the daughter's name) as a pert, illiterate, envious baggage, of whose disgust he ought to make no consideration; then she recounted many instances of her own generosity to that young lady, with the returns of malice and ingratitude she had made; and lastly, enumerated all the imperfections of her person, education, and behaviour; that he might see with what justice the gypsy pretended to vye with those who had been distinguished hy the approbation, and even gallantry of the best people in Vienna.

Having thus established himself her confident and gossip, he knew his next step of promotion would necessarily be to the degree of her lover; and in that belief, resolved to play the same game with Mademoiselle Wilhelmina, whose complexion was very much a-kin to that of her step-mother: indeed they resembled each other too much to live upon any terms of friendship or even decorum. Fathom, in order to enjoy a private conversation with the young lady, never failed to repeat his visit every afternoon, 'till at length, he had the pleasure of finding her disengaged, the jeweller being occupied among his workmen, and his wife gone to assist at a lying-in.

Our adventurer and the daughter had already exchanged their vows, by the expressive language of the eyes; he had even declared himself in some tender ejaculations which had been softly whispered in her ear, when he could snatch an opportunity of venting them, unperceived; nay, he had upon divers occasions, gently squeezed her fair

hand, on pretence of tuning her harpsichord, and been favoured with returns of the same cordial pressure: so that instead of accosting her with the fearful hesitation and reserve of a timid swain, he told her, after the exercise of the doux-yeux, that he was come to confer with her upon a subject that nearly concerned her peace; and asked if she had not observed of late, an evident abatement of friendship in her mother's behaviour to him, whom she had formerly treated with such marks of favour and respect. Mademoiselle would not pay so ill a compliment to her own discernment as to say she had not perceived the alteration, which, on the contrary, she owned was extremely palpable; nor was it difficult to divine the cause of such estranged looks. This remark was accompanied with an irresistible glance, she smiled inchanting, the colour deepened on her cheeks, her breast began to heave, and her whole frame underwent a most agreeable confusion.

Ferdinand was not a man to let such a favourable conjecture pass unregarded. "Yes, charming Wilhelmina! exclaimed the politician in an affected rapture, the cause is as conspicuous as your attractions. She hath in spite of all my circumspection, perceived that passion which it is not in my power to conceal, and in consequence of which, I now declare myself your devoted adorer; or, conscious of your superior excellence, her jealousy had taken the alarm, and though stung with conjecture only, repines at the triumph of your perfections. How far this spirit of malignity may be inflamed to my prejudice. I know not: perhaps as this is the first, it may also be the last opportunity, I shall have of avowing the dearest sentiments of my heart, to the fair object that inspired them; in a word, I may be for ever excluded from you presence. Excuse

me then, divine creature! from the practice of those unnecessary forms, which I should take pride in observing, were I indulged with the ordinary privileges of an honourable lover; and once for all, accept the homage of an heart overflowing with love and admiration. Yes, adorable Wihelmina! I am dazzled with your supernatural beauty; your other accomplishments strike me with wonder and awe. I am enchanted by the graces of your deportment, ravished with the charms of your conversation; and there is a certain tenderness of benevolence in that endearing aspect, which, I trust will not fail to melt with sympathy at the emotions of a faithful slave like me."

So saying, he threw himself upon his knees, and seizing her plump hand, pressed it to his lips with all the violence of real transport. The nymph, whose passions nature had filled to the brim, could not hear such a rhapsody unmoved: being an utter stranger to addresses of this kind, she understood every word of it, in the literal acceptation; she believed implicitly in the truth of the encomiums he had bestowed, and thought it reasonable he should be rewarded for the justice he had done to her qualifications, which had hitherto been almost altogether over-looked: in short, her heart began to thaw, and her face to hang out the flag of capitulation, which was no sooner perceived by our hero, than he renewed his attack with redoubled fervour, pronouncing in a most vehement tone, "Light of my eyes, and empress of my soul! behold me prostrate at your feet, waiting with the most pious resignation, for that sentence from your lips, on which my future happiness and misery must altogether depend. Not with more reverence does the unhappy bashaw kiss the Sultan's letter that contains his doom, than I will submit to your fatal determination. Speak then, angelic sweetness! for, never,

ah never will I rise from this suppliant posture, until I am encouraged to live and hope. No! if you refuse to smile upon my passion, here shall I breathe the last sighs of a despairing lover: here shall this faithful sword do the last office to its unfortunate master, and shed the blood of the truest heart that ever felt the cruel pangs of disappointed love."

The young lady, well nigh overcome by this effusion, which brought the tears into her eyes, "Enough, enough, cried she, interrupting him, sure you men were created for the ruin of our sex." "Ruin, re-ecchoed Fathom, talk not of ruin and Wilhelmina! let these terms be for ever parted, far as the east and west asunder! let ever smiling peace attend her steps, and love and joy still wanton in her train! Ruin indeed, shall wait upon her enemies, if such there be, and those love-lorn wretches who pine with anguish under her disdain: grant me, kind Heaven, a more propitious boon: direct her genial regards to one whose love is without example, and whose constancy is is unparalleled: bear witness to my constancy and faith, ye verdant hills, ye fertile plains, ye shady groves, ye purling streams: and if I prove untrue, ah! let me never find a solitary willow or a bubling brook, by help of which I may be enabled to put a period to my wretched life."

Here this excellent actor began to sob most piteously, and the tender-hearted Wilhelmina, unable longer to withstand his moving tale, with a repetition of the interjection ah! gently dropp'd into his arms. This was the beginning of a correspondence that soon rose to a very interesting pitch; and they forthwith concerted measures for carrying it on, without the knowledge or suspicion of her mother-in-law. Nevertheless the young lady, vanqished as she was, and unskilled in the ways of men, would not all at once

yield at discretion; but insisted upon those terms, without which no woman's reputation can be secured. Our lover far from seeking to evade the proposal, assented to it in terms of uncommon satisfaction, and promised to use his whole industry in finding a priest, upon whose discretion they could rely; nay, he certainly resolved to comply with her request in good earnest, rather than forfeit the advantages which he foresaw in their union. His good fortune, however, exempted him from the necessity of taking such a step, which at best must have been disagreeable: for so many difficulties occurred in the enquiry which was set on foot, and so artfully did Fathom in the mean time manage the influence he had already gained over her heart, that before her passion could obtain a legal gratification, she surrendered to his wish, without any other assurance, than his solemn profession of sincerity and truth, on which she reposed herself with the most implicit confidence and faith.

CHAP. XIII.

He is exposed to a most perilous incident in the course of his intrigue with the daughter.

HE was rejoiced to find her so easily satisfied in such a momentous concern: for the principal aim of the intrigue was to make her necessary to his interested views, and even, if possible, an associate in the fradulent plans he had projected upon her father; consequently he considered this relaxation in her virtue, as an happy omen of his future success. All the obstacles to their mutual enjoyment being thus removed, our adventurer was by his mistress, indulged with an assignation in her own chamber, which, though contiguous to that of her step-mother,

was provided with a door that opened into a common stair-case, to which he had access at all hours of the night.

He did not neglect the rendezvous, but, presenting himself at the appointed time, which was midnight, made the signal that they had agreed upon, and was immediately admitted by Wilhelmina, who waited for him with a lover's impatience. Fathom was not deficient in those expressions of rapture, that are current on such occasions; but, on the contrary, became so loud in the transports of self-congratulation, that his voice reached the ears of the vigilant step-mother, who wakening the jeweller from his first nap, gave him to understand that some person was certainly in close conversation with his daughter; and exhorted him to rise forthwith, and vindicate the honour of his family.

The German, who was naturally of a phlegmatic habit, and never went to bed without a full dose of the creature, which added to his constitutional drowsiness, gave no ear to his wife's intimation, until she had repeated it thrice, and used other means to rouse him from the arms of slumber. Mean while, Fathom and his inamorata overheard her information, and our hero would have made his retreat immediately, through the port by which he entered, had not his intentions been over-ruled by the remonstrances of the young lady, who observed that the door was already fast bolted, and could not possibly be opened without creating a noise that would confirm the suspicion of her parents; and that over and above this objection, he would, in sallying from that door, run the risque of being met by her father, who in all probability, would present himself before it, in order to hinder our hero's escape: she therefore conveyed him softly into her closet, where she assured him he might remain with great

tranquillity, in full confidence that she would take such measures, as would effectually screen him from detection.

He was fain to depend upon her assurance, and accordingly insconced himself behind her dressing table; but he could not held sweating with apprehension, and praying fervently to God for his deliverance, when he heard the jeweller thundring at the door, and calling to his daughter for admittance. Wilhelmina, who was already undressed, and had purposely extinguished the light, pretended to be suddenly waked from her sleep, and starting up, exclaimed in a tone of surprize, "Jesu, Maria! what is the matter?" "Hussy! replied the German in a terrible accent, open the door this instant, there is a man in your bed-chamber; and by the lightning and thunder! I will wash away the stain he has cast upon my honour with the schellum's heart's-blood."

Not at all intimidated by this boisterous threat, she admitted him without hesitation, and with a shrillness of voice peculiar to herself, began to hold forth upon her own innocence and his unjust suspicion, mingling in her harangue, sundry oblique hints aganist her mother in law, importing that some people were so vitiously inclined by their own natures, that she did not wonder at their doubting the virtue of other people; but that these people dispised the insinuations of such people, who ought to be more circumspect in their own conduct, lest they themselves should suffer reprisals from those people whom they had so maliciously slandered.

Having uttered these flowers of rhetoric, which were calculated for the hearing of her step-dame, who stood with a light at her husband's back, the young lady assumed an ironical air, and admonished her father to search every corner of her apartment; she even affected to assist his

inquiry; with her own hands pulled out a parcel of small drawers, in which her trinkets were contained; desired him to look into her needle case and thimble, and seeing his examination fruitless, earnestly intreated him to rummage her closet also, saying with a sneer, that in all probability, the dishonourer would be found in that lurking-place. The manner in which she pretended to ridicule his apprehensions, made an impression upon the jeweller, who was very well disposed to retreat into his own nest, when his wife, with a certain slyness in her countenance, besought him to comply with his daughter's request, and look into that same closet; by which means Wilhelmina's virtue would obtain a compleat triumph.

Our adventurer, who overheard the conversation, was immediately seized with a palsy of fear: he trembled at every joint, the sweat trickled down his forehead, his teeth began to chatter, his hair to stand on end, and he in his heart, bitterly cursed the daughter's petulanee, the mother's malice, together with his own precipitation, by which he was involved in an adventure so pregnant with danger and disgrace. Indeed, the reader may easily conceive his disorder, when he heard the key turning in the lock, and the German swearing that he would make him food for the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air.

Fathom had come unprepared with weapons of defence, was naturally an œconomist of his person, and saw himself on the brink of forfeiting not only the promised harvest of his double intrigue, but also the reputation of a man of honour, upon which all his future hopes depended: his agony was therefore unspeakable, when the door flew open, and it was not till after a considerable pause of recollection, that he perceived the candle extinguished by the motion of the air produced from the German's sudden

irruption. This accident, which disconcerted him so much as to put a full stop to his charge, was very favourable to our hero, who summoning all his presence of mind, crept up into the chimney, while the jeweller stood at the door, waiting for his wife's return with another light; so that when the closet was examined, there was nothing found to justify the report which the step-mother had made; and the father, after having made a slight apology to Wilhelmina, for his intrusion, retired with his yoke-fellow into their own chamber.

The young lady who little thought that her papa would have taken her at her word, was overwhelmed with confusion and dismay, when she saw him enter the closet, and had her lover been discovered, would in all probability have been the loudest in his reproach, and perhaps, have accused him of intention to rob the house: but, she was altogether astonished when she found he had made shift to elude the inquiry of her parents, because she could not conceive the possibility of his escaping by the window, which was in the third story, at a prodigious distance from the ground; and how he could conceal himself in the apartment, was a mystery which she could by no means unfold. Before her father and mother retired, she lighted her lamp, on pretence of being afraid to be in the dark, after the perturbation of spirits she had undergone, and her room was no sooner evacuated of such troublesome visitants, than she secured the doors, and went in quest of her lover.

Accordingly, every corner of the closet underwent a new search, and she called upon his name with a soft voice, which she thought no other person would overhear: but Ferdinand did not think proper to gratify her impatience, because he could not judge of the predicament in which

he stood by the evidence of all his senses, and would not relinquish his post, until he should be better certified that the coast was clear. Mean while, his Dulcinea having performed her inquiry to no purpose, imagined there was something preternatural in the circumstance of his vanishing so unaccountably, and began to cross herself with great devotion. She returned to her chamber, fixed the lamp in the fire-place, and throwing herself upon the bed, gave way to the suggestions of her superstitions, which were reinforced by the silence that prevailed, and the gloomy glimmering of the light. She reflected upon the trespass she had already committed in her heart, and in the conjectures of her fear, believed that her lover was no other than the devil himself, who had assumed the appearance of Fathom, in order to tempt and seduce her virtue.

While her imagination teemed with those horrible ideas, our adventurer concluding from the general stillness, that the jeweller and his wife were at last happily asleep, ventured to come forth from his hiding-place, and stood before his mistress, all begrimed with soot. Wilhelmina lifting up her eyes, and seeing this sable apparition, which she mistook for Satan in propria persona, instantly screamed, and began to repeat her Pater-noster, with an audible voice: upon which Ferdinand, fore-seeing that her parents would be again alarmed, would not stay to undeceive her, and explain himself; but unlocking the door with great expedition, ran down stairs, and luckily accomplished his escape. This was undoubtedly the wisest measure he could have taken: for, he had not performed one half of his descent toward the street, when the German was at his daughter's bed-side, demanding to know the cause of her exclamation: she then gave him an account of what she had seen, with all the exaggerations of her own

fancy, and after having weighed the circumstances of her story, he interpreted the apparition into a thief, who had found means to open the door that communicated with the stair, but having been scared by Wilhelmina's shriek, had been obliged to retreat before he could execute his purpose.

Our hero's spirits were so woefully disturbed by this adventure, that for a whole week he felt no inclination to visit his inamorata, and was not without apprehension that the affair had terminated in an explanation very little to his advantage. He was, however, delivered from this disagreeable suspence, by an accidental meeting with the jeweller himself, who kindly chid him for his long absence, and entertained him in the street with an account of the alarm which his family had sustained, by a thief who broke into Wilhelmina's apartment. Glad to find his apprehension mistaken, he renewed his correspondence with the family, and in a little time, found reason to console himself for the jeopardy and panic he had undergone.

CHAP. XIV.

He is reduced to a dreadful dilemma, in consequence of an assignation with the wife.

NOR was his whole care and attention engrossed by the execution of this scheme upon the daughter. While he managed his concerns in that quarter, with incredible ardour and application, he was not the less indefatigable in the prosecution of his design upon the mother-in-law, which he forwarded with all his art, during those opportunities he enjoyed in the absence of Wilhelmina, who was frequently called away by the domestic duties of

the house. The passions of the jeweller's wife were in such a state of exaltation as exempted our hero from the repulses and fatigue attending a long siege.

We have already observed how cunningly he catered for the gratification of her ruling appetite, and have exhibited pregnant proofs of his ability in gaining upon the human heart; the reader will not therefore be surprized at the rapidity of his conquest over the affections of a lady whose complexion was perfectly amorous, and whose vanity laid her open to all the attempts of adulation. In a word, matters were quickly brought to such a mutual understanding, that one evening, while they amused themselves at lansquenet, Fathom conjured her to give him the rendezvous next day, at the house of any third person of her own sex, in whose discretion she could confide; and after a few affectionate scruples on her side, which he well knew how to surmount, she complied with his request, and the circumstances of the appointment were settled accordingly. After this treaty, their satisfaction rose to such a warmth, and the conversation became so reciprocally endearing, that our gallant expressed his impatience of waiting so long for the accomplishment of his wishes; and with the most eager transport, begged she would, if possible, curtail the term of his expectation, that his brain might not suffer by his standing so many tedious hours on the giddy verge of rapture.

The dame, who was naturally compassionate, sympathized with his condition, and unable to resist his pathetic supplications, gave to understand that his desire could not be granted, without subjecting them both to some hazard, but that she was disposed to run any risque in behalf of his happiness and peace. After this affectionate preamble, she told him that her husband was then engaged in a quarterly

meeting of the jewellers, from whence he never failed to return quite over-whelmed with wine, tobacco, and the phlegm of his own constitution; so that he would fall fast asleep as soon as his head should touch the pillow; and she be at liberty to entertain the lover without interruption, provided he could find means to deceive the jealous vigilance of Wilhelmina, and conceal himself in some corner of the house, unsuspected and unperceived.

Our lover remembering his adventure with the daughter, would have willingly dispensed with this expedient, and began to repent of the eagerness with which he had preferr'd his sollicitation; but, seeing there was now no opportunity of retracting with honour, he affected to enter heartily into the conversation, and after much canvassing, it was determined that while Wilhelmina was employed in the kitchen, the mother should conduct our adventurer to the outward door, where he should pay the compliment of parting, so as to be overheard by the young lady, but in the mean time, glide softly into the jeweller's bed-chamber, which was a place they imagined least liable to the effects of a daughter's prying disposition; and conceal himself in a large press or wardrobe, that stood in one corner of the apartment. The scene was immediately acted with great success, and our hero cooped up in his cage, where he waited so long, that his desires began to subside, and his imagination to aggravate the danger of his situation.

"Suppose," said he to himself, "this brutal German, instead of being stupified with wine, should come home inflamed with brandy, to the use of which he is sometimes addicted; far from feeling any inclination to sleep, he will labour under the most fretful anxiety of watching, every irascible particle in his disposition will be exasperated: he

will be offended with every object that may present itself to his view, and if there is the least ingredient of jealousy in his temper, it will manifest itself in riot and rage. What if his frenzy should prompt him to search his wife's chamber for gallants? this would certainly be the first place to which he would direct his inquiry; or, granting this supposition chimerical, I may be seized with an irresistible inclination to cough, before he is oppressed with sleep: he may be waked by the noise I shall make in disengaging myself from this embarrassed situation; and finally, I may find it impracticable to retire unseen or unheard, after every thing else shall have succeeded to my wish."

These suggestions did not at all contribute to the quiet of our adventurer, who, having waited three whole hours in the most uncomfortable suspence, heard the jeweller brought into the room in that very condition which his fears had prognosticated. He had, it seems, quarrelled over his cups with another tradesman, and received a salutation on the forehead with a candlestick which, not only left an ignominious and painful mark upon his countenance, but even disordered his brain to a very dangerous degree of delirium: so that, instead of allowing himself quietly to be undressed and put to bed by his wife, he answered all her gentle admonitions and caresses, with the most opprobrious invectives and obstreperous behaviour; and though he did not tax her with infidelity to his bed, he virulently accused her of extravagance and want of œconomy, observed her expensive way of living would bring him to a morsel of bread, and unfortunately recollecting the attempt of the supposed thief, started up from his chair, swearing by God's mother, that he would forthwith arm himself with a brace of pistols, and search every apartment of the house. "That press," said he with great

vociferation, "may for aught I know, be the receptacle of some ruffian."

So saying, he approached the ark in which Fathom was embarked, and exclaiming "Come forth, Satan," applied his foot to the door of it, with such violence as threw him from the centre of gravity, and laid him sprawling on his back. This address made such an impression upon our adventurer, that he had well nigh obeyed the summons, and burst from his concealment, in a desperate effort to escape, without being recognized by the intoxicated German: and indeed had the application been repeated, he in all likelihood would have tried the experiment; for, by this time, his terrors had waxed too strong to be much longer suppressed: from this hazardous enterprize, he was however exempted by a lucky accident that happened to his disturber, whose head chancing to pitch upon the corner of a chair, in his fall, he was immediately lulled into a trance; during which, the considerate lady guessing the disorder of her gallant, and dreading further interruption, very prudently released him from his confinement, after she had put out the light, and in the dark conveyed him to the door, where he was comforted with the promise that she would punctually remember the rendezvous of next day.

She then invoked the assistance of the servants, who being waked for the purpose, lifted up their master, and tumbled him into bed, while Ferdinand hied him home in an universal sweat, blessing himself from any future atchievement of that sort, in an house where he had been twice in such imminent danger of life and reputation. Nevertheless, he did not fail to honour the assignation, and avail himself of the disposition his mistress manifested, to make him all the recompence in her power, for the disappointment and chagrin which he had undergone.

CHAP. XV.

But at length succeeds in his attempts upon both.

HAVING thus gained a compleat victory over the affections of these two ladies, he began to convert his good fortune to the purposes of that principle, from which his view was never, no not for a moment, detached. In other words, he used them as ministers and purveyors to his avarice and fraud. As for the mother-in-law, she was of herself so liberal as to anticipate the wishes of any moderate adventurer, and presented him with sundry valuable jewels, as memorials of her esteem; nor was the daughter backward in such expressions of regard; she already considered his interests as her own, and took frequent opportunities of secreting for his benefit, certain stray trinkets that she happened to pick up in her excursions within doors.

All these gratifications he received with demonstrations of infinite constraint and reluctance, and in the midst of his rapacious extortion, acted so cunningly as to impose himself upon both, for a miracle of disinterested integrity. Yet not contented with what he thus could earn, and despairing of being able to steer the bark of his fortune for any length of time, between two such dangerous quicksands, he resolved to profit by the occasion while it lasted. and strike some considerable stroke at once. A plan was formed in consequence of this determination, and at an appointment with the mother, in the house of their female friend, our adventurer appeared with an air of dejection, which he veiled with a thin cover of forced pleasantry, that his mistress might suppose he endeavoured to conceal some mortal chagrin that preyed upon his heart.

The stratagem succeeded to his wish: she observed his countenance between whiles over-cast, took notice of the involuntary sighs he heaved; and with the most tender expressions of sympathy, conjured him to make her acquainted with the cause of his affliction. Instead of gratifying her request immediately, he evaded her questions with a respectful reserve, implying, that his love would not suffer him to make her a partner in his sorrow; and this delicacy on his part, whetted her impatience and concern to such a degree, that rather than keep her in such an agony of doubt and apprehension, he was prevailed upon to tell her, that he had been the preceding night, engaged with a company of his fellow-students, where he had made too free with the champaigne, so that his caution forsook him, and he had been decoyed into a play by a Tyrolese gamester, who stripped him of all his ready money, and obtained from him, an obligation for two hundred florins, which he could not possibly pay, without having recourse to his relation the Count de Melvile, who would have just cause to be incensed at his extravagance.

This information he concluded, by declaring, that cost what it would, he was resolved to make a candid confession of the truth, and throw himself entirely upon the generosity of his patron, who could inflict no other punishment than that of discarding him from his favour and protection: a misfortune, which how grievous soever it might be, he should be able to sustain with fortitude, could he fall upon some method of satisfying the Tyrolese, who was very importunate and savage in his demand. His kind mistress no sooner found out the source of his inquietude, than she promised to dry it up, assuring him that next day at the same hour, she would enable him to discharge the debt; so that he might set his heart at ease, and recollect that gaiety which was the soul of her enjoyment.

He expressed the utmost astonishment at this generous proffer, which, however, he declined with an affected earnestness of refusal, protesting that he should be extremely mortified, if he thought she looked upon him as one of those mercenary gallants, who could make such a sordid use of a lady's affection. "No, madam," cried our politician in a pathetic strain, "whatever happens, I shall never part with that internal consolation that conscious honour never fails to yield in the deepest scenes of solitary distress: the attachment I have the honour to profess for your amiable person, is not founded on such inglorious motives; but, is the genuine result of that generous passion, which none but the noble-minded feel, and the only circumstance of this misfortune, that I dread to encounter, is, the necessity of withdrawing myself for ever, from the presence of her whose genial smiles could animate my soul against all the persecution of adverse fortune."

This declamation, accompanied with a profound sigh, served only to inflame her desire of extricating him from the difficulty in which he was involved. She exhausted all her eloquence in attempting to persuade him that his refusal was an outrage against her affection: he pretended to refute her arguments, and remained unshaken by all the power of her solicitations; until she had recourse to the most passionate remonstrances of love, and fell at his feet in the posture of a forlorn shepherdess. What he refused to her reason, he granted to her tears, because his heart was melted by her affliction, and next day, condescended to accept of her money, out of pure regard to her happiness and peace.

Encouraged by the success of this atchievement, he resolved to practise the same experiment upon Wilhelmina, in hope of extracting an equal share of profit from her sim-

plicity and attachment; and at their very next nocturnal rendezvous in her chamber, re-acted the farce already rehearsed; with a small variation, which he thought necessary to stimulate the young lady in his behalf. He rightly concluded, that she was by no means mistress of such a considerable sum as he had already extorted from her mother; and therefore thought proper to represent himself in the most urgent predicament, that her apprehension, on his account, might be so alarmed, as to engage her in some enterprize for his advantage, which, otherwise, she would never have dreamed of undertaking. With this view, after having described his own calamitous situation, in consequence of her pressing intreaties, which he affected to evade, he gave her to understand that there was no person upon earth, to whom he would have recourse in this emergency; for which reason, he was determined to rid himself of all his cares at once, upon the friendly point of his own faithful sword.

Such a dreadfnl resolution could not fail to operate upon the tender passions of his Dulcinea; she was instantly seized with an an agony of fear and distraction: her grief manifested itself in a flood of tears, while she hung round his neck, conjuring him in the most melting terms, by their mutual love, in which they had been so happy, to lay aside that fatal determination, which would infallibly involve her in the same fate; for, she took Heaven to witness, that she would not one moment survive the knowledge of his death.

He was not deficient in expressions of reciprocal regard: he extolled her love and tenderness with a most extravagant eulogium; and seemed wrung with mortal anguish at the prospect of parting for ever from his lovely Wilhelmina; but his honour was a stern and rigid creditor,

that could not be appeased, except with his blood; and all the boon she could obtain, by dint of the most woeful supplication, was a promise to defer the execution of his baleful purpose, for the space of four and twenty hours, during which, she hoped, Heaven would compassionate her sufferings, and inspire her with some contrivance for their mutual relief. Thus he yielded to her fervent request, rather with a view to calm the present transports of her sorrow, than with any expectation of seeing himself redeemed from his fate, by her interposition; such at least were his professions, when he took his leave, assuring her, that he would not quit his being, before he should have devoted a few hours to another interview with the dear object of his love.

Having thus kindled the train, he did no doubt that the mine of his craft would take effect, and repaired to his own lodging, in full persuasion of seeing his aim accomplished, before the time fixed for their last assignation. His prognostic was next morning verified, by the arrival of a messenger, who brought to him a small parcel, to which was cemented with sealing-wax the following epistle.

"Jewel of my soul!

"Scarce had you, last night, quitted my disconsolate arms, when I happily recollected that there was in my possession, a gold chain, of value more than sufficient to answer the exigence of your present occasions: it was pledged to my grandfather for two hundred crowns, by a knight of Malta, who soon after perished in a sea-engagement with the enemies of our faith; so that it became the property of our house, and was bequeathed to me by the old gentleman, as a memorial of his particular affection. Upon whom can I more properly bestow it, than him who

is already master of my heart! receive it, therefore, from the bearer of this billet, and convert it without scruple to that use which shall be most conducive to your ease and satisfaction; nor seek, from a too romantic notion of honour, which I know you entertain, to excuse yourself, from accepting this testimony of my affection: for, I have already sworn before an image of our blessed lady, that I will no longer own you as the sovereign of my heart, nor even indulge you with another interview, if you reject this mark of tenderness and concern, from your ever faithful

"WILHELMINA."

The heart of our adventurer began to bound with joy, when he surveyed the contents of this letter; and his eyes sparkled with transport at sight of the chain, which he immediately perceived to be worth twice the sum she had mentioned. Nevertheless, he would not avail himself without further question of her generosity; but, that same night, repairing to her apartment at the usual hour of meeting, he prostrated himself before her, and counterfeiting extreme agitation of spirit, begged in the most urgent terms, not even unaccompanied with tears, that she would take back the present which he tendered for her acceptance; and spare him the most insufferable mortification of thinking himself exposed to the imputation of being mercenary in his love. Such, he said, was the delicacy of his passion, that he could not possibly exist under the apprehension of incurring a censure so unworthy of his sentiments; and he would a thousand times, sooner undergo the persecution of his rancorous creditor, than bear the thought of being in the smallest consideration lessened in her esteem: nay, so far did he carry his pretensions to punctilio, as to protest that should she refuse to

quiet the scruples of his honour, on this score, her unyielding beneficence would serve only to hasten the execution of his determined purpose, to withdraw himself at once from a life of vanity and misfortune.

The more pathetically he pleaded for her compliance, the more strenuously did she resist his remonstrances. She advanced all the arguments her reason, love and terror could suggest, reminded him of her oath, from which, he could not suppose she would recede, whatever the consequence might be; and in conclusion, vowed to Heaven in great solemnity and devotion, that she would not survive the news of his death. Thus the alternative she offered, was either to retain the chain and be happy in her affection, or forfeit all title to her love, and die in the conviction of having brought his innocent mistress to an untimely grave.

His fortitude was not proof against this last consideration: "My savage honour," said he, "would enable me to endure the pangs of eternal separation, in the confidence of being endowed with the power of ending these tortures by the energy of my own hand; but, the prospect of Wilhelmina's death, and that too occasioned by my inflexibility, disarms my soul of all her resolution, swallows up the dictates of my jealous pride, and fills my bosom with such a gush of tenderness and sorrow, as overwhelms the whole oeconomy of my purpose! Yes, inchanting creature, I sacrifice my glory to that irresistible reflection: and rather than know myself the cruel instrument of robbing the world of such perfection, consent to retain the fatal testimony of your love."

So saying, he pocketed the chain, with an air of ineffable mortification, and was rewarded for his compliance with the most endearing caresses of his Dulcinea, who amidst

the tumults of his joy, ejaculated a thousand acknowledgments to Heaven, for having blessed her with the affection of such a man, whose honour was unrivalled by any thing but his love.

CHAP. XVI.

His success begets a blind security, by which he is once again well nigh entrapped in his Dulcinea's apartment.

IN this manner did the crafty Fathom turn to account those ingratiating qualifications he inherited from nature; and maintain with incredible assiduity and circumspection, an amorous correspondence with two domestic rivals, who watched the conduct of each other, with the most indefatigable virulence of envious suspicion, until an accident happened, which had well-nigh overturned the bark of his policy, and induced him to alter the course, that he might not be shipwrecked on the rocks that began to multiply in the prosecution of his present voyage.

The jeweller, who, as a German, wanted neither pride nor ostentation, never failed to celebrate the anniversary of his birth, by an annual feast granted to his neighbours and friends; and on these occasions, was accustomed to wear that chain, which though bequeathed to his daughter, he considered as an ornament appertaining to the family, whereof he himself was head: accordingly, when the time of this festival revolved, he as usual, ordered Wilhelmina to surrender it for the day. This injunction, the reader will perceive, our young lady was in no condition to obey; she had, however, foreseen the demand, and contrived a scheme of behaviour, for the occasion, which she forthwith put in execution.

With an air of uncommon chearfulness purposely assumed, she retired to her closet, on pretence of complying with his desire, and having employed a few minutes in rummaging her drawers, and disordering her moveables, uttered a loud shriek, that brought her father instantly into the apartment, where he found his daughter tossing about her cloaths and trinkets, with violent demonstrations of disorder and affright, and heard her in a lamentable strain declare, that she was robbed of her chain, and for ever undone. This was so far from being an agreeable intimation to the jeweller, that he was struck dumb with astonishment and vexation, and it was not till after a long pause, that he pronounced the word Sacrament! with an emphasis, denoting the most mortifying surprize.

Soon as that exclamation escaped from his lips, he flew to the scrutore as if instinctively, and joining Wilhelmina in her occupation, tumbled its whole contents upon the floor, in a trice.

While he was thus employed, in the most expressive silence, the wife of his bosom chanced to pass that way, and seeing them both occupied, with such violence and trepidation, believed at first, that they were certainly actuated by the spirit of frenzy; but when she interposed, by asking with great earnestness, the cause of such transports and distracted behaviour; and heard her husband reply with an accent of despair, "The chain! the chain of my forefathers is no more." She immediately justified his emotion, by undergoing the same alarm, and without further hesitation, engaged herself in the search, beginning with a song, which might be compared to the hymn of battle among the Greeks, or rather more aptly, to that which the Spartan females sung round the altar of Diana, surnamed Orthian: for, it was attended with strange gesti-

culations, and in the course of utterance, became so loud and shrill, that the guests, who were by this time partly assembled, being confounded at the clamour, rushed towards the place from whence it seemed to proceeed, and found their landlord, with his wife and daughter in the attitudes of distraction and despair.

When they understood the nature of the case, they condoled the family on their misfortune, and would have retired, on the supposition that it would defeat the mirthful intent of their meeting; but the jeweller mustering up his whole temper and hospitality, intreated them to excuse his disorder, and favour him with their company, which, he observed, was now more than ever wanted, to dispel the melancholy ideas inspired by his loss. Notwithstanding this apology, and the efforts he made in the sequel, to entertain his friends with jollity and good humour, his heart was so linked to the chain, that he could not detach himself from the thoughts of it, which invaded him at short intervals, in such qualms as effectually spoiled his appetite and hindered his digestion.

He revolved within himself, the circumstances of his disaster, and in canvassing all the probable means, by which the chain could be stolen, concluded that the deed must have been done by some person in the family, who, in consequence of having access to his daughter's chamber, had either found the drawer left open by her carelessness and neglect, or found means to obtain a false key, by some waxen impression: for, the locks of the escritore were safe and uninjured. His suspicion being thus confined within his own house, sometimes pitched upon his workmen, and sometimes upon his wife, who, he thought, was the more likely to practise such finesse, as she considered Wilhelmina in the light of a daughter-in-law,

whose interest interfered with her own, and who had often harangued to him in private, on the folly of leaving this very chain in the young lady's possession.

The more he considered this subject, he thought he saw the more reason to attribute the damage he had sustained, to the machinations of his spouse, who, he did not doubt, was disposed to feather her own nest, at the expence of him and his heirs, and who, with the same honest intention had already secreted for her own private use, those inconsiderable jewels which of late had at different times, been missing. Aroused by these sentiments, he resolved to retaliate her own schemes, by contriving means to visit her cabinet in secret, and if possible, to rob the robber, of the spoils she had gathered to his prejudice, without coming to any explanation, which might end in domestic turmoils and eternal disquiet.

While the husband exercised his reflection in this manner, his innocent mate did not allow the powers of her imagination to rest in idleness and sloth. Her observations touching the loss of the chain were such, as a suspicious woman biassed by hatred and envy, would naturally make. To her it seemed highly improbable, that a thing of such value, so carefully deposited, should vanish without the connivance of its keeper, and without much expence of conjecture, divined the true manner in which it was conveyed. The sole difficulty that occurred in the researches of her sagacity, was to know the gallant, who had been favoured with such a pledge of Wilhelmina's affection; for as the reader will easily imagine, she never dreamed of viewing Ferdinand in that odious perspective. In order to satisfy her curiosity, discover this happy favourite, and be revenged on her petulant rival, she prevailed upon the jeweller to employ a scout, who should

watch all night upon the stair, without the knowledge of any other person in the family, alledging, that in all likelihood, the house-maid gave private admittance to some lover, who was the author of all the losses they had lately suffered, and that they might possibly detect him in his nocturnal adventures; and observing that it would be imprudent to intimate their design to Wilhelmina, lest through the heedlessness and indiscretion of youth, she might chance to divulge the secret, so as to frustrate their aim.

A Swiss, in whose honesty the German could confide, being hired for this purpose, was posted in a dark corner of the stair-case, within a few paces of the door, which he was directed to watch, and actually stood centinel three nights, without perceiving the least object of suspicion; but on the fourth, the evil stars of our adventurer conducted him to the spot, on his voyage to the apartment of his Dulcinea, with whom he had pre-concerted the assignation. Having made the signal, which consisted of two gentle taps on her door, he was immediately admitted, and the Swiss, no sooner saw him fairly housed, than he crept softly to the other door, that was left open for the purpose, and gave immediate intimation of what he had perceived: this intelligence, however, he could not convey so secretly, but the lovers, who were always vigilant upon these occasions, overheard a sort of commotion in the jeweller's chamber, the cause of which their apprehension was ingenious enough to comprehend.

We have formerly observed, that our adventurer could not make his retreat by the door, without running a very great risque of being detected, and the expedient of the chimney he had no inclination to repeat; so that he found himself in a very uncomfortable dilemma, and was utterly

abandoned by all his invention and address; when his mistress in a whisper, desired him to begin a dialogue, aloud, in an apology, importing that he had mistaken the door; and that his intention was to visit her father, touching a ring belonging to the young count Melvile, which, she knew, Fathom had put into his hands, in order to be altered.

Ferdinand seizing the hint, availed himself of it, without delay, and unbolting the door, pronounced in an audible voice, "Upon my honour, Mademoiselle, you wrong my intention, if you imagine I came hither with any disrespectful or dishonourable motive: I have business with you father, which cannot be delayed till to-morrow, without manifest prejudice to my friend and myself; therefore I took the liberty of visiting him at these untimely hours; and it has been my misfortune to mistake the door in the dark. I beg pardon for my involuntary intrusion; and again assure you, that nothing was farther from my thoughts, than any design to violate that respect, which I have always entertained for you and your father's family.

To this remonstrance, which was distinctly heard by the German and his wife, who by this time, stood listening at the door, the young lady replied in a shrill accent of displeasure, "Sir, I am bound to believe that all your actions are conducted by honour; but, you must give me leave to tell you, that your mistake is a little extraordinary, and your visit even to my father at this time of the night, altogether unseasonable, if not mysterious. As for the interruption I have suffered in my repose, I impute it to my own forgetfulness, in leaving my door unlocked, and blame myself so severely for the omission that I shall tomorrow put it out of my own power to be guilty of the like for the future, by ordering the passage to be nailed

up; mean while, if you would persuade me of your well-meaning, you will instantly withdraw, lest my reputation should suffer by your continuance in my apartment."

"Madam, answered our hero, I will not give you an opportunity to repeat the command, which I shall forthwith obey, after having entreated you once more to forgive the disturbance I have given." So saying, he gently opened the door, and at sight of the German and his wife, who, he well knew, waited for his exit, started back, and gave tokens of confusion which was partly real and partly affected. The jeweller fully satisfied with Fathom's declaration to his daughter, received him with a complaisant look, and in order to alleviate his concern, gave him to understand that he already knew the reason of his being in that apartment, and desired to be informed of what had procured him the honour to see him at such a juncture.

"My dear friend, said our adventurer, pretending to recollect himself with difficulty. I am utterly ashamed and confounded to be discovered in this situation; but as you have overheard what passed between Mademoiselle and me, I know you will do justice to my intention and forgive my mistake. After begging pardon for having intruded upon your family at these hours, I must now tell you, that my cousin count Melvile was sometime ago so much misrepresented to his mother, by certain malicious informers, who delight in sowing discord in private families, that she actually believed her son an extravagant spendthrift, who had not only consumed his remittances, in the most riotous scenes of disorder, but also indulged a pernicious appetite for gaming to such a degree, that he had lost all his cloaths and jewels at play. In consequence of such false information, she expostulated with him in a severe letter, and desired he would transmit to her that ring which is in

your custody, it being a family stone, for which she expressed an inestimable value. The young gentleman, in his answer to her reproof, endeavoured to vindicate himself from the aspersions which had been cast upon his character, and with regard to the ring, told her it was at present in the hands of a jeweller, in order to be new set, according to her own directions, and that whenever it should be altered, he would send it home to her by some safe conveyance. This account the good lady took for an evasion, and upon that supposition, has again written to him, in such a provoking stile, that although the letter arrived but half an hour ago, he is determined to despatch a courier before morning with the mischievous ring, for which, in compliance with the impetuosity of his temper, I have taken the freedom to disturb you at this unseasonable hour.

The German paid implicit faith to every circumstance of this story, which indeed could not well be supposed to be invented extempore; the ring was immediately restored, and our adventurer took his leave, congratulating himself upon his signal deliverance from the snare in which he had fallen.

CHAP. XVII.

The step-dame's suspicions being awakened, she lays a snare for our adventurer, from which he is delivered by the interposition of his good genius.

THOUGH the husband swallowed the bait, without further inquiry, the penetration of the wife was not so easily deceived: that same dialogue in Wilhelmina's apartment, far from allaying, rather inflamed her suspicion, because in the like emergency, she herself had once

profited by the same, or nearly the same contrivance. Without communicating her doubts to the father, she resolved to double her attention to the daughter's future conduct, and keep such a strict eye over the behaviour of our gallant, that he should find it very difficult, if not impossible, to elude her observation. For this purpose, she took into her pay an old maiden, of the right sour disposition, who lived in an house opposite to her own, and directed her to follow the young lady in all her out-goings, whenever she should receive from the window a certain signal, which the mother-in-law agreed to make for the occasion. It was not long before this scheme succeeded to her wish: the door of communication, betwixt Wilhelmina's apartment and the stair-case, being nailed up, by the jeweller's express order, our adventurer was altogether deprived of those opportunities he had hitherto enjoyed; and was not at all mortified to find himself so restricted, in a correspondence which began to be tiresome and disagreeable: but the case was far otherwise with his Dulcinea, whose passion, the more it was thwarted, raged with greater violence, like a fire, that from the attempts that are made to extinguish it, gathers greater force, and flames with double fury.

Upon the second day of her misfortune, she had written a very tender billet, lamenting her unhappiness, in being deprived of those meetings which constituted the chief joy of her life, and intreating him to contrive some means of renewing the delicious commerce in an unsuspected place. This intimation she proposed to convey privately into the hand of her lover, during his next visit to the family; but both were so narrowly eyed by the mother, that she found the execution of her design impracticable; and next forenoon, on pretence of going to

church, repaired to the house of a companion, who being also her confidante, undertook to deliver the billet with her own hand.

The she-dragon employed by her mother, in obedience to the sign, which was displayed from the window, immediately put on her veil, and followed Wilhelmina at a distance, until she saw her fairly housed: she would not even then, return from her excursion, but hovered about in sight of the door, with a view of making further observations: in less than five minutes after the young lady disappeared, the scout perceived her coming out, accompanied by her comrade, from whom she instantly parted, and bent her way towards the church in good earnest, while the other steered her course in another direction. The duenna, after a moment's suspence and consideration, divined the true cause of this short visit, and resolved to watch the motions of the confidante, whom she traced to the academy in which our hero lodged, and from which she saw her return, after the supposed message was delivered.

Fraught with this intelligence, the rancorous understrapper, hied her home to the jeweller's wife, and made a faithful recital of what she had seen; communicating, at the same time, her own conjectures on the subject. Her employer was equally astonished and incensed at this information: she was seized with all that frenzy which takes possession of a slighted woman, when she finds herself supplanted by a detested rival; and in the first transports of her indignation, devoted them as sacrifices to her vengeance: nor was her surprize so much the effect of his dissimulation, as of his want of taste and discernment. She inveighed against him, not as the most treacherous lover, but as the most abject wretch, in courting the smiles of

such an aukward dowdy, while he enjoyed the favours of a woman, who had numbered princes in the train of her admirers. For the brilliancy of her attractions, such as they at present shone, she appealed to the decision of her minister, who consulted her own satisfaction and interest, by flattering the other's vanity and resentment: and so unaccountable did the depravity of our hero's judgment appear to this conceited dame, that she began to believe there was some mistake in the person, and to hope that Wilhelmina's gallant was not in reality her professed admirer Mr. Fathom, but rather one of his fellow lodgers, whose passion he favoured with his mediation and assistance.

On this notion, which nothing but mere vanity could have inspired, in opposition to so many more weighty presumptions, she took the resolution of bringing the affair to a fuller explanation, before she would concert any measures to the prejudice of our adventurer, and forthwith dispatched her spy back to his lodgings to solicit on the part of Wilhelmina an immediate answer to the letter he had received. This was an expedition with which the old maiden would have willingly dispensed, because it was founded upon an uncertainty, which might be attended with troublesome consequences; but rather than be the means of retarding a negociation, so productive of that sort of mischief which is particularly agreeable to all of her tribe, she undertook to manage and effect the discovery, in full confidence of her own talents and experience.

With such a fund of self-sufficiency and instigation, she repaired to the academy on the instant, and inquiring for Mr. Fathom, was introduced to his apartment, where she found him in the very act of writing a billet to the jeweller's daughter. The artful agent having asked, with

the mysterious air of an expert go-between, if he had not lately received a message from a certain young lady; and being answered in the affirmative, gave him to understand that she herself was a person favoured with the friendship and confidence of Wilhelmina, whom she had known from her cradle, and often dandled on her knee; then in the genuine stile of a pratling dry-nurse, she launched out in encomiums on his Dulcinea's beauty and sweetness of temper, recounting many simple occurrences of her infancy and childhood; and finally, desiring a more circumstantial answer to that which she had sent to him by her friend Catherina. In the course of her loquacity, she had also, according to her instructions, hinted at the misfortune of the door; and on the whole, performed her cue with such dexterity and discretion, that our politician was actually over-reached, and having finished his epistle, committed it to her care, with many verbal expressions of eternal love and fidelity to his charming Wilhelmina.

The messenger doubly rejoiced at her atchievement, which not only recommended her ministry, but also gratified her malice, returned to her principal with great exultation, and delivering the letter, the reader will easily conceive the transports of that lady, when she read the contents of it in these words.

"Angelic Wilhelmina!

"To forget those extatic scenes we have enjoyed together, or even live without the continuation of that mutual bliss, were to quit all title to perception, and resign every hope of future happiness. No! my charmer, while my head retains the least spark of invention, and my heart glows with the resolution of a man, our correspondence shall not be cut off by the machinations of an envious step-

mother, who never had attractions to inspire a generous passion, and now that age and wrinkles have destroyed what little share of beauty she once possessed, endeavours, like the fiend in paradise, to blast those joys in others, from which she is herself eternally excluded. Doubt not, dear sovereign of my soul! that I will study with all the eagerness of desiring love, how to frustrate her malicious intention, and renew those transporting moments, the remembrance of which now warms the breast of your ever constant

"FATHOM."

Had our hero murdered her father, or left her a disconsolate widow, by effecting the death of her dear husband, there might have been a possibility of her exerting the christian virtues of resignation and forgiveness; but such a personal outrage as that contained in this epistle, precluded all hope of pardon, and rendered penitence of no signification. His atrocious crime being now fully ascertained, this virago gave a loose to her resentment, which became so loud and tempestuous, that her informer shuddered at the storm she had raised, and began to repent of having communicated the intelligence which seemed to have such a violent effect upon her brain.

She endeavoured, however, to allay the agitation, by flattering her fancy with the prospect of revenge, and gradually soothed her into a state of deliberate ire; during which she determined to take ample vengeance on the delinquent. In the zenith of her rage, she would have had immediate recourse to poison or steel, had she not been diverted from her mortal purpose, by her counsellor, who represented the danger of engaging in such violent measures, and proposed a more secure scheme, in the execu-

tion of which she would see the perfidious wretch sufficiently punished, without any hazard to her own person or reputation. She advised her to inform the jeweller of Fathom's efforts, to seduce her conjugal fidelity, and impart to him a plan, by which he would have it in his power, to detect our adventurer in the very act of practising upon her virtue.

The lady relished her proposal, and actually resolved to make an assignation with Ferdinand, as usual, and give notice of the appointment to her husband, that he might personally discover the treachery of his pretended friend, and inflict upon him such chastisement, as the German's brutal disposition should suggest, when inflamed by that species of provocation. Had this project been brought to bear, Ferdinand in all likelihood, would have been disqualified from engaging in any future intrigue; but fate ordained, that the design should be defeated, in order to reserve him for more important occasions.

Before the circumstances of the plan could be adjusted, it was his good fortune to meet his Dulcinea in the street, and in the midst of their mutual condolance on the interruption they had suffered in their correspondence, he assured her, that he would never give his invention respite, until he should have verified his protestations contained in the letter he had delivered to her discreet agent. This allusion to a billet she had never received, did not fail to alarm her fears, and introduce a very mortifying explanation, in which he so accurately described the person of the messenger, that she forthwith comprehended the plot, and communicated to our hero her sentiments on that subject.

Though he expressed infinite anxiety and chagrin at this misfortune, which could not fail to raise new obstacles

to their love, his heart was a stranger to the uneasiness he affected; and rather pleased with the occasion, which would furnish him with pretences to withdraw himself gradually, from an intercourse by this time become equally cloying and unprofitable. Being well acquainted with the mother's temperament, he guessed the present situation of her thoughts, and concluding she would make the jeweller a party in her revenge, he resolved from that moment to discontinue his visits, and cautiously guard against any future interview with the lady, whom he had rendered so implacable.

It was well for our adventurer that his good fortune so seasonably interposed; for that same day, in the afternoon, he was favoured with a billet from the jeweller's wife, couched in the same tender stile she had formally used, and importing an earnest desire of seeing him next day, at the wonted rendezvous. Although his penetration was sufficient to perceive the drift of this message; or at least, to discern the risque he should run, in complying with her request, yet he was willing to be more fully certified of the truth of his suspicion, and wrote an answer to the billet, in which he assured her, that he would repair to the place of appointment, with all the punctuality of an impatient lover. Nevertheless, instead of performing this promise, he, in the morning, took post in a public house opposite to the place of assignation, in order to reconnoitre the ground, and about noon had the pleasure of seeing the German wrapped in a cloak, enter the door of his wife's she-friend, though the appointment was fixed at five in thn evening. Fathom blessed his good angel, for having conducted him clear of this conspiracy, and kept his station with great tranquility, till the hour of meeting, when he beheld his enraged Thalestris take the same

route, and enjoyed her disappointment with ineffable satisfaction.

Thus favoured with a pretext, he took his leave of her, in a letter, giving her to understand, that he was no stranger to the barbarous snare she had laid for him; and upbraiding her with having made such an ungrateful return for all his tenderness and attachment. She was not backward in couveying a reply to this expostulation, which seemed to have been dictated in all the distraction of a proud woman who sees her vengeance baffled, as well as her love disdained. Her letter was nothing but a succession of reproaches, menaces, and incoherent execrations. She taxed him with knavery, insensibility and dissimulation; imprecated a thousand curses upon his head, and threatened not only to persecute his life with all the arts that hell and malice could inspire, but also to wound him in the person of her daughter-in-law, who should be inclosed for life in a convent, where she would have leisure to repent of those loose and disorderly practices, which he had taught her to commit, and of which she could not pretend innocence, as they had it in their power to confront her with the evidence of her lover's own confession. Yet all this denunciation was qualified with an alternative, by which he was given to understand, that the gates of mercy were still open, and that penitence was capable of washing out the deepest stain of guilt.

Ferdinand read the whole remonstrance with great composure and moderation, and was content to incur the hazard of her hate, rather than put her to the trouble of making such an effort of generosity, as would induce her to forgive the heinous offence he had committed; nor did his apprehension for Wilhelmina in the least influence his behaviour on this occasion: so zealous was he for her spi-

ritual concerns, that he would have been glad to hear she had actually taken the veil; but he knew such a step was not at all agreeable to her disposition, and that no violence would be offered to her inclinations on that score, unless her step-mother should communicate to the father that letter of Fathom which she had intercepted, and by which the German would be convinced of his daughter's backsliding; but this measure, he rightly supposed, the wife would not venture to take, lest the husband, instead of taking her advice, touching the young lady, should seek to compromise the affair, by offering her in marriage to her debaucher; a proffer, which, if accepted, would overwhelm the mother with vexation and despair. He therefore chose to trust to the effects of lenient time, which he hoped would gradually weaken the resentment of this Penthesilea, and dissolve his connexion with the other parts of the family, from which he longed to be totally detached.

How well soever he might have succeeded in his attempts to shake off the yoke of the mother, who by her situation in life was restrained from prosecuting those measures her resentment had planned against his fortitude and indifference; he would have found greater difficulty than he had foreseen, in disengaging himself from the daughter, whose affections he had won under the most solemn professions of honour and fidelity; and who, now now she was debarred of his company and conversation, and in danger of losing him for ever, had actually taken the resolution of disclosing the amour to her father, that he might interpose in behalf of her peace and reputation, and secure her happiness by the sanction of the church.

CHAP. XVIII.

Our hero departs from Vienna, and quits the domain of Venus for the rough field of Mars.

LUCKILY for our adventurer, before he adhered to this determination, the young count de Melvile was summoned to Presburg by his father, who desired to see him, before he should take the field, in consequence of a rupture between the emperor and the French king; and Fathom of course, quitted Vienna, in order to attend his patron, after he and Renaldo had resided two whole years in that capital, where the former had made himself perfect in all the polite exercises, become master of the French tongue, and learned to speak the Italian with great facility, over and above those other accomplishments in which we have represented him as an inimitable original.

As for the young count, his exteriors were so much improved by the company to which he had access, since his departure from his father's house, that his parents were equally surprised and overjoyed at the alteration. All that aukwardness and rusticity, which hung upon his deportment, was, like the rough coat of a diamond, polished away; the connexion and disposition of his limbs seemed to have been adjusted anew; his carriage was become easy, his air perfectly genteel, and his conversation gay and unrestrained. The merit of this reformation was in a great measure ascribed to the care and example of Mr Fathom, who was received by the old count and his lady with marks of singular friendship and esteem; nor was he over looked by Mademoiselle, who still remained in a state of celibacy, and seemed to have resigned all hope of

altering her condition; she expressed uncommon satisfaction at the return of her old favourite, and re-admitted him into the same degree of familiarity with which he had been honoured before his departure.

The joy of Teresa was so excessive at his arrival, that she could scarce suppress her raptures, so as to conceal them from the notice of the family; and our hero, upon this occasion, performed the part of an exquisite actor, in dissembling those transports which his bosom never knew. So well had his pupil retained the lessons of her instructor, that in the midst of those fraudulent appropriations, which she still continued to make, she had found means to support her interest and character with Mademoiselle, and even to acquire such influence in the family, that no other servant male or female, could pretend to live under the same roof, without paying incessant homage to this artful waiting-woman, and yielding the most abject submission to her will.

The young gentlemen having tarried at Presburg about six weeks, during which a small field equipage was prepared for Renaldo, they repaired to the camp at Heilbron, under the auspices of count Melvile, in whose regiment they carried arms, as volunteers, with a view to merit promotion in the service, by their own personal behaviour. Our adventurer would have willingly dispensed with this occasion of signalizing himself, his talents being much better adapted to another sphere of life; nevertheless, he affected uncommon alacrity at the prospect of gathering laurels in the field, and subscribed to his fortune with a good grace; forseeing that even in a campaign, a man of his art and ingenuity, might find means to consult his corporal safety, without any danger to his reputation. Accordingly, before he had lived full three weeks in camp,

the damp situation and sudden change in his way of life, had such a violent effect upon his constitution, that he was deprived of the use of his limbs, and mourned without ceasing, his hard fate, by which he found himself precluded from all opportunity of exerting his diligence, courage and activity, in the character of a soldier, to which he now aspired.

Renaldo, who was actually enamoured of a martial life, and missed no occasion of distinguishing himself, consoled his companion, with great cordiality, encouraged him with the hope of seeing his constitution familiarized to the inconveniences of a camp, and accommodated him with every thing which he thought would alleviate the pain of his body, as well as the anxiety of his mind. The old count, who sincerely sympathized with his affliction, would have persuaded him to retire into quarters, where he could be carefully nursed, and provided with every thing necessary to a person in his condition; but, such was his desire of glory, that he resisted his patron's importunities, with great constancy, till at length, seeing the old gentleman obstinately determined to consult his health, by removing him from the field, he gradually suffered himself to recover the use of his hands, made shift to sit up in his bed, and amuse himself with cards or back gammon, and notwithstanding the feeble condition of his legs, ventured to ride out on horseback, to visit the lines; though the count and his son would never yield to his sollicitations so far, as to let him accompany Renaldo in those excursions and reconnoitring parties by which a volunteer inures himself to toil and peril, and acquires that knowledge in the operations of war, which qualifies him for a command in the service.

Notwithstanding this exemption from all duty, our adventurer managed matters so as to pass for a youth of

infinite mettle, and even rendered his backwardness and timidity subservient to the support of that character, by expressing an impatience of lying inactive, and a desire of signalizing his prowess, which even the disabled condition of his body conld scarce restrain. He must be a man of very weak nerves and excessive irresolution, who can live in the midst of actual service, without imbibing some portion of military fortitude; danger becomes habitual, and loses a great part of its terror; and as fear is often caught by contagion, so is courage communicated among the inviduals of an army. The hope of fame, desire of honours and preferment, envy, emulation, and the dread of disgrace, are motives which co-operate in suppressing that aversion to death or mutilation, which nature hath implanted in the human mind; and therefore, it is not to be wondered at, if Fathom, who was naturally chicken-hearted, gained some advantages over his disposition, before the end of the campaign, which happened to be neither perilous nor severe.

During the winter, while both armies remained in quarters, our adventurer attended his patron to Presburg, and before the troops were in motion, Renaldo obtained a commission, in consequence of which, he went into garrison at Philipsburg, whither he was followed by our hero, while the old count's duty called him to the field in a different place. Ferdinand, for some time had no reason to be dissatisfied with this disposition, by which he was at once delivered from the fatigues of a campaign, and the inspection of a severe censor, in the person of count Melvile; and his satisfaction was still increased by an accidental meeting with the Tyrolese, who had been his confederate at Vienna, and now chanced to serve in garrison, on the same footing with himself. These two knights-errant renewed their former correspondence, and as all soldiers are

addicted to gaming, levied contributions upon all those officers who had money to lose, and temerity to play.

However they had not long pursued this branch of traffic, when their success was interrupted by a very serious occurrence, that for the present intirely detached the gentlemen in the garrison from such amusements. The French troops invested fort Kehl, situated on the Rhine, opposite to Strasburg, and the Imperialists dreading that the next storm would fall upon Philipsburg, employed themselves with great diligence, to put that important fortress in a proper posture of defence. If the suspension of play was displeasing to our hero, the expectation of being besieged was by no means more agreeable. He knew the excellence of the French engineers, the power of their artillery, and the perseverance of their general: he felt, by anticipation, the toils of hard duty upon the works, the horrors of night-alarms, cannonading, bombardment, sallies and mines blown up, and deliberated with himself, whether or not he should privately withdraw, and take refuge among the besiegers; but, when he reflected that such a step, besides the infamy that must attend it, would be like that of running upon Scylla, seeking to avoid Charybdis, as he would be exposed to more danger and inconvenience in the trenches, than he could possibly undergo in the town, and after all run the risque of being taken and treated as a deserter; upon these considerations, he resolved to submit himself to his destiny, and endeavoured to mitigate the rigour of his fate, by those arts he had formerly practised with success. He accordingly found means to enjoy a very bad state of health during the whole siege, which lasted about six weeks after the trenches were opened, and then the garrison marched out by capitulation, with all the honours of war.

CHAP. XIX.

He puts himself under the guidance of his associate, and stumbles upon the French camp, where he finishes his military carreer.

NOTHING else of moment was transacted during that campaign; and in the winter our adventurer, with the young count, and his friend the Tyrolese, were disposed in quarters of cantonment, where Ferdinand made himself amends for the chagrin he had undergone, by the exercise of those talents in which he excelled. Not that he was satisfied with the sphere of life in which he acted; though he knew himself consummate in the art of play, he was not at all ambitious of a gamester's name; nor did he find himself disposed to hazard those discoveries and explanations to which heroes of that class are sometimes necessarily exposed. His aim was to dwell among the tents of civil life, undisturbed by quarrels and the din of war, and render mankind subservient to his interest, not by stratagems which irritate, but by that suppleness of insinuation, which could not fail to sooth the temper of those on whom he meant to prey.

He saw that all his expectations of count Melvile's future favour, were connected with his choice of a military life; and that his promotion in the service would, in a great measure, depend upon his personal behaviour in such emergencies as he did not at all wish to encounter. On the other hand, he confided so much in his own dexterity and address, that he never doubted of being able to rear a splendid fortune for himself, provided he could once obtain a fixed and firm foundation. He had in fancy,

often enjoyed a prospect of England, not only as his native country, to which, like a true citizen, he longed to be united; but also as the land of promise, flowing with milk and honey, and abounding with subjects on which he knew his talents would be properly exercised.

These reflections never occurred, without leaving a strong impression upon the mind of our adventurer, which influenced his deliberations, in such a manner, as at length amounted to a perfect resolution of withdrawing himself privately from a service that teemed with disagreeable events; and of transporting himself into the land of his ancestors, which he considered as the Canaan of all able adventurers. But, previous to his appearance on that stage, he was desirous of visiting the metropolis of France, in which he hoped to improve himself in the knowledge of men and things, and acquire such intelligence as would qualify him to act a more important part upon the British scene. After having for sometime indulged these prospects in secret, he determined to accommodate himself with the company and experience of the Tyrolese, whom, under the specious title of an associate, he knew he could convert into a very serviceable tool, in forwarding the execution of his own projects.

Accordingly, the inclination of this confederate, was sounded by distant hints, and being found apt, our hero made him privy to his design of decamping without beat of drum; though, at the same time, he begged his advice, touching the method of their departure, that he might retire with as much delicacy as the nature of such a step would permit. Divers consultations were held upon this subject, before they adhered to the resolution of making their escape from the army, after it should have taken the field in the spring; because, in that case, they would have

frequent opportunities of going abroad on foraging parties, and during one of these excursions, might retire in such a manner as to persuade their companions, that they had fallen into the enemy's hands.

Agreeable to this determination, the camp was no sooner formed in Alsace, than our associates began to make preparations for their march, and had already taken all the previous measures for their departure, when an accident happened, which our hero did not fail to convert to his own advantage: this was no other than the desertion of Renaldo's valet, who, in consequence of a gentle chastisement, which he had richly merited, thought proper to disappear, after having plundered his master's portmanteau, which he had forced open for the purpose. Ferdinand, who was the first person that discovered the theft, immediately comprehended the whole adventure, and taking it for granted, that the delinquent would never return, resolved to finish what the fugitive had imperfectly performed.

Being favoured with the unreserved confidence of the young count, he instantly had recourse to his bureau, the locks of which, he found means to burst open, and examining a private drawer contrived with great art to conceal Renaldo's jewels and cash, made himself master of the contents without hesitation; then cutting open his cloak bag, and strewing the tent with his linnen and cloaths, began to raise his voice, and produced such a clamour as alarmed the whole neighbourhood, and brought a great many officers into the tent.

He on this, as on all other occasions, performed his cue to a miracle, expressing confusion and concern so naturally, in his gestures and exclamation, that no man could possibly suspect his sincerity; nay, to such a degree of

finesse did his cunning amount, that when his friend and patron entered, in consequence of an intimation he soon received of his loss, our adventurer exhibited undoubted signs of distraction and delirium, and springing upon Renaldo with all the frantic fury of a bedlamite, "Villain!" cried he, "restore the effects you have stole from your master, or you shall be immediately committed to the care of the prêvot." However mortified M. de Melvile might be, at his own misfortune, the condition of his friend seemed to touch him more nearly; he undervalued his own loss, as a trifle that could be easily repaired, said every thing which he thought would tend to sooth and compose the agitation of Ferdinand, and finally prevailed upon him to retire to rest. The calamity was wholly attributed to the deserter, and Renaldo, far from suspecting the true author, took occasion, from his behaviour on this emergency, to admire him as a mirrour of integrity and attachment; in such an exquisite manner did he plan all his designs, that almost every instance of his fraud furnished matter of triumph to his reputation.

Having thus profitably exercised his genius, this subtle politician, thought it high time to relinquish his military expectations, and securing all his valuable acquisitions about his own person, rode out with his understrapper, in the midst of fifty dragoons who went in quest of forage. While the troopers were employed in making up their trusses, the two adventurers advanced towards the skirt of the wood, on the pretence of reconnoitring, and the Tyroleze, who undertook to be our hero's guide, directing him to a path which led towards Strasburg, they suddenly vanished from the eyes of their companions, who in a few minutes hearing the report of several pistols, which the confederates purposely fired, conjectured that

they had fallen in with a party of French, by whom they were made prisoners of war.

The Tyroleze had over-rated his own knowledge, when he took upon himself the task of conducting our hero; for, upon their arrival at a certain place, where two roads crossed each other, he chanced to follow that which not only frustrated their intention, but even led them directly to the French camp: so that in the twilight they fell in upon one of the out-guards, before they were aware of their mistake. Whatever confusion and perplexity they might undergo, when they heard themselves questioned by the centinel on the advanced post, certain it is, they betrayed no symptoms of fear or disorder; but while Ferdinand endeavoured to recollect himself, his fellow-traveller, with the appearance of admirable intrepidity and presence of mind, told the soldier, that he and his companion were two gentlemen of family, who had quitted the Austrian army, on account of having sustained some ill-usage, which they had no opportunity of resenting in any other way; and that they were come to offer their services to the French general, to whose quarters they desired to be immediately conveyed.

The centinel, to whom such an instance of desertion was neither rare, nor indeed uncommon, directed them without scruple to the next post, where they found a serjeant's party, from which, at their request, they were transmitted to the officer of the grand guard, and by him, next morning, introduced to count Coigny, who very politely received them as volunteers in the army of France. Though this translation was not at all to our hero's liking, he was forced to acquiesce in his fate, glad to find himself, on these terms, in possession of his effects, of which he would otherwise have been infallibly rifled.

This campaign, however, was the most disagreeable period of his whole life; because the manner in which he had entered into the service, subjected him to the particular observation and notice of the French officers; so that he was obliged to be very alert in his duty, and summon all his fortitude to maintain the character he had assumed. What rendered his situation still more unpalatable, was the activity of both armies in the course of this season, during which, over and above sundry fatiguing marches and counter-marches, he was personally engaged in the affair at Hallch, which was very obstinate, where being in the skirts of the detachment he was actually wounded in the face by the sword of an hussar; but this was, luckily for him, the last time he found himself under the necessity of exerting his military prowess; for a cessation of arms was proclaimed, before he was cured of his wound, and peace concluded about the end of the campaign.

During his sojourn in the French camp, he assumed the character of a man of family, who being disgusted at some supercilious treatment he had met with, in the German service, and at the same time ambitious of carrying arms under the banners of France, took the opportunity of retreating by stealth from his friends, accompanied only by one with whom he could entrust his intention. In this capacity, he had managed his matters to such advantage, that many French officers of rank were very well disposed to contribute their interest in his behalf, had his inclination verged towards promotion in the army; but he thought proper to conceal his real design, under the specious pretext of longing to see the metropolis of France, that centre of pleasure and politeness, in which he proposed to spend some time for the improvement of his address and understanding. These were motives too laudable to be

opposed by his new patrons, some of whom furnished him with letters of recommendation to certain noblemen of the first rank at the court of Versailles, for which place he and his companion set out from the banks of the Rhine, very well satisfied with the honourable dismission they had obtained from a life of inconvenience, danger and alarm.

CHAP. XX.

He prepares a stratagem, but finds himself countermined; proceeds on his journey, and is overtaken by a terrible tempest.

IN the course of this journey, Ferdinand, who was never deficient in his political capacity, held a secret conclave with his own thoughts, not only touching the plan of his own future conduct, but also concerning his associate, of whose fidelity and adherence he began to entertain such doubts as discouraged him from the prosecution of that design, in which the Tyroleze had been at first included: for, he had lately observed him practise the arts of his occupation among the French officers, with such rapacity and want of caution, as indicated a dangerous temerity of temper, as well as a furious rage of acquiring, which might be sometime or other, satiated upon his own friends. In other words, our adventurer was afraid that his accomplice would profit by his knowledge of the road and countries through which they travelled, and after having made free with his most valuable effects, in consequence of the familiarity subsisting between them, leave him some morning without the ceremony of a formal adieu.

Arroused by this suspicion, he resolved to anticipate

the supposed intention of the Tyroleze, by taking his own departure in the same abrupt manner; and this scheme he actually put in execution, upon their arrival in Bar le duc, where it was agreed they should spend a day to repose and refresh themselves from the fatigue of hard riding. Ferdinand, therefore, taking the advantage of his companion's absence, for the Tyroleze had walked abroad to view the town, found means to hire a peasant, who undertook to conduct him through a bye-road, as far as Chalons, and with this guide, he accordingly set out on horseback, after having discharged the bill, left a blank paper sealed up in form of a letter, directed to his friend, and secured behind his own saddle, a pair of leathern bags in which his jewels and cash were usually contained. So eager was our hero to leave the Tyroleze at a considerable distance behind, that he rode all night at a round pace, without halting, and next morning, found himself at a village distant thirteen good leagues, from any part of the route, which he and his companion had at first resolved to pursue.

Here thinking himself safely delivered from the cause of all his apprehension, he determined to lie incognito for a few days, so as that he might run no risque of an accidental meeting upon the road, with the person whose company he had forsaken; and accordingly he took possession of an apartment, in which he went to rest, desiring his guide to wake him, when dinner should be ready. Having enjoyed a very comfortable refreshment of sleep, with his bags under his pillow, he was summoned according to his direction, and ate a very hearty meal with great tranquillity and internal satisfaction. In the afternoon, he amused himself with happy presages, and ideal prospects of his future fortune, and in the midst of these imaginary banquets was seized with an inclination of realizing his bliss, and regal-

ing his eye-sight with the fruits of that success, which had hitherto attended his endeavours. Thus inflamed, he opened the repository, and O reader! what were his reflections, when in lieu of mademoiselle Melvile's ear-rings and necklace, the German's golden chain, divers jewels of considerable value, the spoils of sundry dupes, and about two hundred ducats in ready money, he found neither more nor less than a parcel of rusty nails, disposed in such a manner as to resemble in weight and bulk the moveables he had lost.

It is not to be supposed, our adventurer made this discovery without emotion. If the eternal salvation of mankind could have been purchased for the tenth part of his treasure, he would have left the whole species in a state of reprobation, rather than redeem them at that price, unless he had seen in the bargain, some evident advantage to his own concerns: one may therefore easily conceive with what milkiness of resignation, he bore the loss of the whole, and saw himself reduced from such affluence, to the necessity of depending upon about twenty ducats, and some loose silver which he carried in his pocket, for his expence upon the road. However bitter this pill might be in swallowing, he so far mastered his mortification, as to digest it with a good grace: his own penetration at once, pointed out the canal through which this misfortune had flowed upon him; he forthwith placed the calamity to the account of the Tyrolese, and never doubting that he had retired with the booty across the Rhine, into some place to which he knew Fathom would not follow his footsteps, he formed the melancholy resolution of pursuing with all dispatch, his journey to Paris, that he might with all convenient expedition, indemnify himself for the discomfiture he had sustained.

With regard to his confederate, his conjecture was perfectly right; that adventurer, though infinitely inferior to our hero in point of genius and invention, had manifestly the advantage of him, in the articles of age and experience; he was no stranger to Fathom's qualifications, the happy exertion of which he had often seen. He knew him to be an œconomist of the most frugal order, consequently concluded his finances were worthy of examination; and upon the true principles of a sharper, eased him of the incumbrance, taking it for granted, that in so doing, he only precluded Ferdinand from the power of acting the same tragedy upon him, should ever opportunity concur with his inclination. He had therefore concerted his measures with the dexterity of an experienced conveyancer, and snatching the occasion, while our hero travel-tainted, lay sunk in the arms of profound repose, he ript up the seams of the leathern depository, withdrew the contents, introduced the parcel of nails, which he had made up for the purpose, and then repaired the breach with great deliberation.

Had Fathom's good genius prompted him to examine his effects next morning, the Tyroleze, in all probability, would have maintained his acquisition by force of arms; for his personal courage was rather more determined than that of our adventurer, and he was conscious of his own ascendancy in this particular; but, his good fortune prevented such explanation. Immediately after dinner, he availed himself of his knowledge, and betaking himself to a remote part of the town, set out in a post-chaise for Luneville, while our hero was meditating his own escape.

Fathom's conception was sufficient to comprehend the whole of this adventure, as soon as his chagrin would give his sagacity fair play; nor would he allow his resolution

to sink under the trial; on the contrary, he departed from the village, that same afternoon, under the auspices of his conductor, and found himself benighted in the midst of a forest far from the habitations of men; the darkness of the night, the silence and solitude of the place, the indistinct images of the trees that appeared on every side, "stretching their extravagant arms athwart the gloom," conspired with the dejection of spirits occasioned by his loss to disturb his fancy, and raise strange phantoms in his imagination. Although he was not naturally superstitious, his mind began to be invaded with an awful horror, that gradually prevailed over all the consolations of reason and philosophy; nor was his heart free from the terrors of assassination. In order to dissipate these disagreeable reveries, he had recourse to the conversation of his guide, by whom he was entertained with the history of divers travellers, who had been robbed and murdered by ruffians, whose retreat was in the recesses of that very wood.

In the midst of this communication, which did not at all tend to the elevation of our hero's spirits, the conductor made an excuse for dropping behind, while our traveller jogged on in expectation of being joined again by him in few minutes; he was however disappointed in that hope: the sound of the other horse's feet, by degrees, grew more and more faint, and at last, altogether died away. Alarmed at this circumstance, Fathom halted in the middle of the road, and listened with the most fearful attention; but his sense of hearing was saluted with nought but the dismal sighings of the trees, that seemed to foretell an approaching storm; accordingly the Heavens contracted a more dreary aspect, the lightning began to gleam, the thunder to roll, and the tempest raising its voice to a tremendous roar, descending in a torrent of rain.

In this emergency, the fortitude of our hero was almost quite overcome; so many concuring circumstances of danger and distress, might have appalled the most undaunted breast; what impression then must they have made upon the mind of Ferdinand, who was by no means a man to set fear at defiance! indeed, he had well nigh lost the use of his reflection, and was actually invaded to the skin, before he could recollect himself so far as to quit the road, and seek for shelter among the thickets that surrounded them. Having rode some furlongs into the forest, he took his station under a tuft of tall trees, that screened him from the storm, and in that situation called a council within himself, to deliberate upon his next excursion. He persuaded himself that his guide had deserted him for the present, in order to give intelligence of a traveller, to some gang of robbers with whom he was connected; and that he must of necessity fall a prey to those banditti, unless he should have the good fortune to elude their search, and disentangle himself from the mazes of the wood.

Harrowed with these apprehensions, he resolved to commit himself to the mercy of the hurricane, as of two evils the least, and penetrate streight forwards through some devious opening, until he should be delivered from the forest. For this purpose, he turned his horse's head in a line, quite contrary to the direction of the high-road which he had left, on the supposition, that the robbers would pursue that tract in quest of him, and that they would never dream of his deserting the highway, to traverse an unknown forest, amidst the darkness of such a boisterous night. After he had continued in this progress, thro' a succession of groves, and bogs, and thorns and brakes, by which, not only his cloaths, but also his skin suffered in a grievous manner, while every nerve quivered

with eagerness of dismay; he at length reached an open plain, and pursuing his course, in full hope of arriving at some village, where his life would be safe, he descried a rush light at a distance, which he looked upon as the star of his good fortune, and riding towards it at full speed, arrived at the door of a lone cottage, into which he was admitted by an old woman, who understanding he was a bewildered traveller, received him with great hospitality.

When he learned from his hostess, that there was not another house within three leagues, that she could accommodate him with a tolerable bed, and his horse with lodging and oats, he thanked Heaven for his good fortune in stumbling upon this homely habitation, and determined to pass the night under the protection of the old cottager, who gave him to understand that her husband, who was a faggot-maker, had gone to the next town to dispose of his merchandize, and that in all probability, he would not return till next morning, on account of the tempestuous night. Ferdinand sounded the beldame with a thousand artful interrogations, and she answered with such appearance of truth and simplicity, that he concluded his person was quite secure; and after having been regaled with a dish of eggs and bacon, desired she would conduct him into the chamber where she proposed he should take his repose. He was accordingly ushered up by a sort of ladder, into an apartment furnished with a standing-bed, and almost half filled with trusses of straw. He seemed extremely well-pleased with his lodging, which in reality exceeded his expectation, and his kind landlady cautioned him against letting the candle approach the combustibles, took her leave, and locked the door on the outside.

CHAP. XXI.

He falls upon Scylla, seeking to avoid Charybdis.

FATHOM, whose own principles taught him to be suspicious, and ever upon his guard against the treachery of his fellow-creatures, could have dispensed with this instance of her care in confining her guest to her chamber, and began to be seized with strange fancies, when he observed that there was no bolt on the inside of the door, by which he might secure himself from intrusion. In consequence of these suggestions, he proposed to take an accurate survey of every object in the apartment, and in the course of his inquiry, had the mortification to find the dead body of a man, still warm, who had been lately stabbed, and concealed beneath several bundles of straw.

Such a discovery could not fail to fill the breast of our hero, with unspeakable horror; for he concluded that he himself would undergo the same fate before morning, without the interposition of a miracle in his favour. In the first transports of his dread, he ran to the window with a view to escape by that outlet, and found his flight effectually obstructed by divers strong bars of iron. Then his heart began to palpitate, his hair to bristle up, and his knees to totter; his thoughts teemed with presages of death and destruction; his conscience rose up in judgment against him, and he underwent a severe paroxysm of dismay and distraction. His spirits were agitated into a state of fermentation that produced a species of resolution akin to that which is inspired by brandy or other strong liquors, and by an impulse that seemed supernatural, he was immediately hurried into measures for his own preservation.

What upon a less interesting occasion his imagination durst not propose, he now executed without scruple or remorse: he undressed the corpse that lay bleeding among the straw, and conveying it to the bed in his arms, deposited it in the attitude of a person who sleeps at his ease; then he extinguished the light, took possession of the place from whence the body had been removed, and holding a pistol ready cocked in each hand, waited for the sequel with that determined purpose, which is often the immediate production of despair. About midnight he heard the sound of feet ascending the ladder, the door was softly opened, he saw the shadow of two men stalking towards the bed, a dark lanthorn being unshrouded, directed their aim to the supposed sleeper, and he that held it, thrust a poignard to his heart; the force of the blow made a compression on the chest, and a sort of groan issued from the windpipe of the defunct; the stroke was repeated, without producing a repetition of the note, so that the assassins concluded the work was effectually done, and retired for the present, with a design to return and rifle the deceased at their leisure.

Never had our hero spent a moment in such agony, as he felt during this operation; the whole surface of his body was covered with a cold sweat, and his nerves were relaxed with an universal palsy: in short, he remained in a trance that, in all probability, contributed to his safety; for, had he retained the use of his senses, he might have been discovered by the transports of his fear. The first use he made of his retrieved recollection was to perceive that the assassins had left the door open in their retreat; and he would have instantly availed himself of this their neglect, by sallying out upon them, at the hazard of his life, had not he been restrained by a conversation he overheard in

the room below, importing that the ruffians were going to set out upon another expedition, in hopes of finding more prey: they accordingly departed, after having laid strong injunctions upon the old woman, to keep the door fast locked during their absence; and Ferdinand took his resolution without farther delay. So soon as by his conjecture, the robbers were at a sufficient distance from the house, he rose from his lurking-place, moved softly towards the bed, and rummaging the pockets of the deceasd, found a purse well stored with ducats, of which, together with a silver watch and a diamond ring, he immediately possessed himself without scruple; then descending with great care and circumspection, into the lower apartment, stood before the old beldam, before she had the least intimation of his approach.

Accustomed as she was to the trade of blood, the hoary hag did not behold this apparition without giving signs of infinite terror and astonishment, believing it was no other than the spirit of her second guest who had been murdered, she fell upon her knees, and began to recommend herself to the protection of the saints, crossing herself with as much devotion, as if she had been intitled to the particular care and attention of Heaven. Nor did her anxiety abate, when she was undeceived in this her supposition, and understood it was no phantom, but the real substance of the stranger, who without staying to upbraid her with the enormity of her crimes, commanded her on pain of immediate death to produce his horse, to which being conducted, he set her upon the saddle without delay, and mounting behind, invested her with the management of the reins, swearing in a most peremptory tone, that the only chance she had for her life, was in directing him safely to the next town; and that so soon as she should give him

the least cause to doubt her fidelity in the performance of that task, he would, on the instant, act the part of her executioner.

This declaration had its effect upon the withered Hecate, who, with many supplications for mercy and forgiveness, promised to guide him in safety, to a certain village at the distance of two leagues, where he might lodge in security, and be provided with a fresh horse, or other convenience, for pursuing his intended route. On these conditions, he told her, she might deserve his clemency, and they accordingly took their departure together, she being placed astride upon the saddle, holding the bridle in one hand, and a switch in the other; and our adventurer sitting on the crupper, superintending her conduct, and keeping the muzzle of a pistol close at her ear. In this equipage they travelled across part of the same wood, in which his guide had forsaken him; and it is not to be supposed, that he passed his time in the most agreeable reverie, while he found himself involved in the labyrinth of those shades, which he considered the haunts of robbery and assassination.

Common fear was a comfortable sensation to what he felt in this excursion. The first steps he had taken for his preservation, were the effects of meer instinct, while his faculties were extinguished or suppressed by despair; but, now as his reflection began to recur, he was haunted by the most intolerable apprehensions. Every whisper of the wind through the thickets, was swelled into the hoarse menaces of murder, the shaking of the boughs was construed into the brandishing of poignards, and every shadow of a tree, became the apparition of a ruffian eager for blood. In short, at each of these occurrences, he felt what was infinitely more tormenting than the stab of a real dagger; and at every fresh filip of his fear, he acted as remem-

brancer to his conductress, in a new volley of imprecations, importing that her life was absolutely connected with his opinion of his own safety.

Human nature could not long subsist under such complicated terror: at last he found himself clear of the forest, and was blessed with the distant view of an inhabited place: he then began to exercise his thoughts upon a new subject. He debated with himself, whether he should make a parade of his intrepidity and public spirit, by disclosing his atchievement and surrendring his guide to the penalty of the law; or leave the old hag and her accomplices to the remorse of their own consciences, and proceed quietly on his journey to Paris, in undisturbed possession of the prize he had already obtained. This last step he determined to take, upon recollecting that in the course of his information, the story of the murdered stranger would infallibly attract the attention of justice, and in that case, the effects he had borrowed from the defunct, must be refunded for the benefit of those who had a right to the succession. This was an argument which our adventurer could not resist; he foresaw that he should be stript of his acquisition, which he looked upon as the fair fruits of his valour and sagacity; and moreover, be detained as an evidence against the robbers, to the manifest detriment of his affairs: perhaps too, he had motives of conscience that dissuadged him from bearing witness against a set of people, whose principles did not much differ from his own.

Influenced by such considerations, he yielded to the first importunity of the beldam, whom he dismissed at a very small distance from the village, after he had earnestly exhorted her to quit such an atrocious course of life, and attone for her past crimes, by sacrificing her associates to the demands of justice. She did not fail to vow a perfect

reformation, and to prostrate herself before him, for the favour she had found; then she betook herself to her habitation, with full purpose of advising her fellow murderers to repair with all dispatch to the village, and impeach our hero, who wisely distrusting her professions, staid no longer in the place, than to hire a guide for the next stage, which brought him to the city of Chalons sur Marne.

CHAP. XXII.

He arrives at Paris, and is pleased with his reception.

HE was not so smitten with the delightful situation of this ancient town, but that he abandoned it as soon as he could procure a postchaise, in which he arrived at Paris, without having been exposed to any other troublesome adventure upon the road. He took lodgings at a certain hotel in the Fauxbourg de St. Germain, which is the general rendezvous of all the strangers that resort to this capital; and now sincerely congratulated himself upon his happy escape from his Hungarian connections, and from the snares of the banditti; as well as upon the spoils of the dead body, and his arrival at Paris, from whence there was such a short conveyance to England, whither he was attracted by far other motives than that of filial veneration for his native soil.

He suppressed all his letters of recommendation, which he justly concluded, would subject him to a tedious course of attendance upon the great, and lay him under the necessity of solliciting preferment in the army, than which nothing was farther from his inclination; and resolved to make his appearance in the character of a private gentleman, which would supply him with opportunities of examining the different scenes of life in such a gay metropo-

lis, so as that he should be able to chuse that sphere in which he could move the most effectually to his own advantage. He accordingly hired an occasional domestick, and under the denomination of count Fadome, which he had retained since his elopement from Renaldo, repaired to dinner at an ordinary, to which he was directed as a reputable place frequented by fashionable strangers of all nations.

He found this piece of information perfectly just; for he no sooner entered the apartment, than his ears were saluted with a strange confusion of sounds, among which he at once distinguished the high and low Dutch, barbarous French, Italian and English languages. He was rejoiced at this occasion of displaying his own qualifications; took his place at one of three long tables, betwixt a Westphalian count, and a Bolognian marquis, insinuated himself into the conversation with his usual address, and in less than half an hour, found means to accost a native of each different country, in his own mother tongue.

Such extensive knowledge did not pass unobserved. A French abbé, in a provincial dialect, complimented him upon his retaining that purity in pronunciation, which is not to be found in the speech of a Parisian. The Bolognian mistaking him for a Tuscan, "Sir, said he, I presume you are from Florence: I hope the illustrious house of Lorrain leaves you gentlemen of that famous city, no room to regret the loss of your own princes." The castle of Versailles becoming the subject of conversation, monsieur le Comte appealed to him as to a native German, whether it was not inferior in point of magnificence to the Chateau of Grubenhagen: the Dutch officer addressing himself to Fathom, drank to the prosperity of Faderland, and asked if he had not once served in garrison at Schenkenschans;

and an English knight swore with great assurance, that he had frequently rambled with him at midnight, among the hundreds of Drury.

To each person he replied in a polite, tho' mysterious manner, which did not fail to inhance their opinion of his good breeding and importance; and long before the desert appeared, he was by all the company supposed to be a personage of great consequence, who for some substantial reasons, found it convenient to keep himself incognito. This being the case, it is not to be doubted that particular civilities were poured upon him from all quarters: he perceived their sentiments, and encouraged them, by behaving with that sort of complaisance which seems to be the result of engaging condescension in a character of superior dignity and station. His affability was general; but his chief attention limited to those gentlemen already mentioned, who chanced to sit nearest him at table; and he no sooner gave them to understand that he was an utter stranger in Paris, than they unanimously begged to have the honour of making him acquainted with the different curiosities peculiar to that metropolis.

He accepted of their hospitality, accompanied them to a coffee-house in the afternoon, from whence they repaired to the opera, and afterwards adjourned to a noted hotel, in order to spend the remaining part of the evening. It was here that our hero secured himself effectually in the footing he had gained in their good graces: he in a moment saw through all the characters of the partie, and adapted himself to the humour of each individual; without descending from that elevation of behaviour, which, he perceived, would operate among them in his behalf. With the Italian he discoursed on musick, in the stile of a connoisseur; and indeed had a better claim to that title

than the generality of those upon whom it is usually conferred; for he understood the art in theory as well as in practice, and would have made no contemptible figure among the best performers of the age.

He harangued upon taste and genius, to the abbé, who was a wit and critic, ex officio, or rather ex vestitu: for, a young pert Frenchman, the very moment he puts on the petit collet, or little band, looks upon himself as an inspired son of Apollo; and every one of the fraternity thinks it incumbent upon him to assert the divinity of his mission: in a word, the abbés are a set of people, that bear a strong analogy to the templars in London. Fools of each fabric, sharpers of all sorts, and dunces of every degree, profess themselves of both orders: the templar is, generally speaking a prig, so is the abbé: both are distinguished by an air of petulance and self-conceit, which holds a middle rank betwixt the insolence of a first rate buck, and the learned pride of a supercilious pedant. The abbé is supposed to be a younger brother in quest of preferment in the church: the temple is considered as a receptacle or seminary for younger sons, intended for the bar; but a great number of each profession turn aside into other paths of life, long before they reach these proposed goals: an abbé is often metamorphosed into a foot soldier; a templar sometimes sinks into an attorney's clerk: the gallies of France abound with abbés; and many templars may be found in our American plantations; not to mention those who have made a public exit nearer home. Yet, I would not have it thought that my description includes every individual of those societies. Some of the greatest scholars, politicians, and wits that ever Europe produced, have wore the habit of an abbé; and many of our most noble families in England derive their honours from those who have studied

law in the temple: the worthy sons of every community shall always be sacred from my censure and ridicule; and while I laugh at the folly of particular members, I can still honour and revere the institution.

But, let us return from this comparison, which some readers may think impertinent and unseasonable; and observe that the Westphalian count, Dutch officer, and English knight, were not excepted from the particular regard and attention of our adventurer: he pledged the German in every bumper; flattered the Hollander with compliments upon the industry, wealth and policy of the seven United Provinces; but he reserved his chief battery for his own countryman, on the supposition that he was, in all respects, the best adapted for the purposes of a needy gamester: him, therefore, he cultivated with extraordinary care, and singular observance; for he soon perceived him to be an humourist, and from that circumstance derived an happy presage of his own success. The baronet's disposition seemed to be cast in the true English mould. He was sour, silent and contemptuous; his very looks indicated a consciousness of superior wealth, and he never opened his mouth, except to make some dry, sarcastic, national reflection: nor was his behaviour free from that air of suspicion which a man puts on, when he believes himself in a croud of pickpockets whom his caution and vigilance set at defiance: in a word, though his tongue was silent on the subject, his whole demeanour was continually saying, "You are all a pack of poor, lousy rascals, who have a design upon my purse: 'tis true, I could buy your whole generation; but, I wont be bubbled, d'ye see; I am aware of your flattery, and upon my guard against all your knavish pranks; and I come into your company, for my own amusement only."

Fathom having reconnoitred this peculiarity of temper, instead of treating him with that assiduous complaisance, which he received from the other gentlemen of the party, kept aloof from him in the conversation, with a remarkable shyness of distant civility, and seldom took notice of what he said, except with a view to contradict him, or retort some of his satyrical observations. This he conceived to be the best method of acquiring his good opinion; because the Englishman would naturally conclude he was a person who could have no sinister views upon his fortune, else he would have chosen quite a different manner of deportment. Accordingly, the knight seemed to bite at the hook: he listened to Ferdinand with uncommon regard; he was even heard to commend his remarks; and at length drank to their better acquaintance.

CHAP. XXIII.

Acquits himself with address in a nocturnal riot.

THE Italian and the abbé were the first who began to grow whimsical under the influence of the Burgundy; and in the heat of their elevation, proposed that the company should amuse themselves during the remaining part of the night, at the house of an obliging dame, who maintained a troop of fair nymphs, for the accommodation of the other sex. The proposal was approved by all, except the Hollander, whose œconomy the wine had not as yet invaded; and while he retreated soberly to his own lodgings, the rest of the society adjourned in two coaches, to the temple of love, where they were received by the venerable priestess, a personage turned of seventy, who seemed to exercise the functions of her calling, in despight of the most cruel ravages of time: for age had bent

her into the form of a Turkish bow: her head was agitated by the palsy, like the leaf of the poplar-tree, her hair fell down in scanty parcels, as white as the driven snow: her face was not simply wrinkled, but ploughed into innumerable furrows: her jaws could not boast of one remaining tooth; one eye distilled a large quantity of rheum, by virtue of the fiery edge that surrounded it, the other was altogether extinguished, and she had lost her nose in the course of her ministration. The Delphic sibyl was but a type of this hoary matron, who by her figure might have been mistaken for the consort of chaos, or mother of time. Yet there was something meritorious in her appearance, as it denoted her an indefatigable minister to the pleasure of mankind; and as it formed an agreeable contrast with the beauty and youth of the fair damsels that wantoned in her train. It resembled those discords in musick, which properly disposed, contribute to the harmony of the whole piece: or those horrible giants who in the world of romance, used to guard the gates of the castle, in which the inchanted damsel was confined.

This Urganda seemed to be aware of her own importance, and perfectly well acquainted with the human appetite; for she compelled the whole company to undergo her embrace; then a lacquey in magnificent livery, ushered them into a superb apartment, where they waited some minutes, without being favoured with the appearance of the ladies, to the manifest dissatisfaction of the abbé, who sending for the gouvernante, reprimanded her severely for her want of politesse. The old lady, who was by no means a pattern of patience and submission, retorted his reproaches with great emphasis and vivacity: her eloquence flowed altogether in the Covent-garden strain; and I question whether the celebrated mother D--gl--s

herself could have made such a figure in extemporaneous altercation.

After having bestowed upon the abbé the epithets of saucy insignificant pimp, she put him in mind of the good offices which he had received at her hands; how she had supplied him with bed, board, and bedfellow, in his greatest necessity; sent him abroad with money in his pockets, and in a word, cherished him in her bosom, when his own mother had abandoned him to distress: she then reviled him for presuming to affront her before strangers, and gave the company to understand that the young ladies would wait upon them as soon as they could be confessed and receive absolution from a worthy cordelier, who was now employed in performing that charitable office. The gentlemen were satisfied with this remonstrance, which argued the old lady's pious concern for the souls that were under her care, and our adventurer proposed an accommodation betwixt her and the abbé, who was prevailed upon to ask her pardon, and received her blessing upon his knees.

This affair had not long been adjusted, when five damsels were introduced in a very gay dishabille, and our hero was complimented with the privilege of chusing his Amanda from the whole bevy: when he was provided, the others began to pair themselves, and unhappily, the German count chanced to pitch upon the same nymph who had captivated the desires of the British knight: a dispute immediately ensued, for the Englishman made his addresses to the lady, without paying the least regard to the priority of the other's claim; and she being pleased with his attachment, did not scruple to renounce his rival, who swore by the thunder, lightning and sacrament, that he would not quit his pretensions for any prince in Christen-

dom, much less for a little English chevalier, whom he had already honoured too much in condescending to be his companion.

The knight, provoked at this stately declaration, which was the immediate effect of anger and ebriety, eyed his antagonist with a most contemptuous aspect, and advised him to avoid such comparisons for the future: "We all know, said he, the importance of a German count; I suppose your revenue amounts to three hundred rixdollars; and you have a chateau that looks like the ruins of an English gaol. I will bind myself to lend you a thousand pounds upon a mortgage of your estate (and a bad bargain I am sure I should have:) if I do not in less than two months, find a yeoman of Kent, who spends more in strong ale, than the sum total of your yearly income; and were the truth known, I believe that lace upon your coat, is no better than tinsel, and those fringed ruffles with fine Holland sleeves, tacked to a shirt of brown canvas, so that were you to undress yourself before the lady, you would only expose your own poverty and pride."

The count was so much enraged at these sarcastic observations, that his faculty of speech was overwhelmed by his resentment; though in order to acquit himself of the Englishman's imputation, he forthwith pulled off his cloaths with such fury, that his brocard waistcoat was tore from top to bottom. The knight mistaking his meaning, considered this demeanour as a fair challenge, to try which was the better man in the exercise of boxing; and on that supposition, began to strip in his turn, when he was undeceived by Fathom, who put the right interpretation upon the count's behaviour, and begged that the affair might be compromised. By this time the Westphalian recovered the use of his tongue, and with many threats and imprecations,

desired they would take notice how falsely he had been aspersed, and do him justice in espousing his claim to the damsel in question.

Before the company had time or inclination to interest themselves in the quarrel, his opponent observed that no person who was not a meer German, would ever dream of forcing the inclinations of a pretty girl, whom the accidents of fortune had subjected to his power: that such compulsion was equivalent to the most cruel rape that could be committed; and that the lady's aversion was not at all surprising; for, to speak his own sentiments, were he a woman of pleasure, he would as soon grant favours to a Westphalian hog, as to the person of his antagonist. The German enraged at this comparison, was quite abandoned by his patience and discretion: he called the knight an English clown, and swearing he was the most untoward beast of a whole nation of mules, snatched up one of the candlesticks, which he launched at him with such force and violence, that it sung through the air, and winging its flight into the anti-chamber, encountered the skull of his own valet, who with immediate prostration received the message of his master.

The knight, that he might not be behind hand with the Westphalian, in point of courtesy, returned the compliment with the remaining chandelier, which also missed its mark, and smiting a large mirrour that was fixed behind them, emitted such a crash as one might expect to hear if a mine were sprung beneath a manufacture of glass. Both lights being thus extinguished, a serious combat ensued in the dark; the Italian scampered off with infinite agility, and as he went down stairs, desired that nobody would interpose, because it was an affair of honour, which could not be made up. The ladies consulted their safety in flight;

count Fathom slily retired to one corner of the room, while the abbé having upon him the terrors of the commissaire, endeavoured to appease and part the combatants, and in the attempt, sustained a random blow upon his nose, which sent him howling into the other chamber, where finding his band besmeared with his own blood, he began to caper about the apartment, in a transport of rage and vexation.

Mean while, the old gentlewoman being alarmed with the noise of the battle, and apprehensive that it would end in murder, to the danger and discredit of herself and family, immediately mustered up her myrmidoms, of whom she always retained a formidable band, and putting herself at their head, lighted them to the scene of uproar: Ferdinand, who had hitherto observed a strict neutrality, no sooner perceived them approach, than he leaped in between the disputants, that he might be found acting in the character of a peace-maker; and indeed, by this time, victory had declared for the baronet, who had treated his antagonist with a cross-buttock, which laid him almost breathless on the floor. The victor was prevailed upon, by the intreaties of Fathom, to quit the field of battle, and adjourn into another room, where in less than half an hour, he received a billet from the count, defying him to single combat on the frontiers of Flanders, at an appointed time and place. The challenge was immediately accepted by the knight, who being flushed with conquest, treated his adversary with great contempt.

But, next day, when the fumes of the Burgundy were quite exhaled, and the adventure recurred to his remembrance and sober reflection, he waited upon our adventurer at his lodgings, and sollicited his advice in such a manner, as gave him to understand that he looked upon

what had happened, as a drunken brawl, which ought to have no serious consequences. Fathom foreseeing that the affair might be managed for his own interest, professed himself of the baronet's opinion; and without hesitation, undertook the office of a mediator, assuring his principal, that his honour should suffer no stain in the course of his negotiation.

Having received the Englishman's acknowledgments for this instance of friendship, he forthwith set out for the place of the German's habitation, and understanding he was still asleep, insisted upon his being immediately waked, and told, that a gentleman from the chevalier, desired to see him, upon business of importance which could not be delayed. Accordingly, his valet de chambre, pressed by Fathom's importunities and remonstrances, ventured to go in and shake the count by the shoulder; when this furious Teutonian, still agitated by the fever of the preceding night, leaped out of bed in a frenzy, and seizing his sword that lay upon a table, would have severely punished the presumption of his servant, had not he been restrained by the entrance of Ferdinand, who with a peremptory countenance, gave him to understand that the valet had acted at his immediate instigation; and that he was come, as the Englishman's friend, to concert with him proper measures for keeping the appointment they had made at their last meeting.

This message effectually calmed the German, who was not a little mortified to find himself so disagreeably disturbed. He could not help cursing the impatience of his antagonist, and even hinting that he would have acted more like a gentleman and good christian, in expressing a desire of seeing the affair accommodated, as he knew himself to be the aggressor, consequently the first offender

against the laws of politeness and good fellowship. Fathom finding him in a fit temper of mind, took the opportunity of assenting to the reasonableness of his observation: he ventured to condemn the impetuosity of the baronet, who, he perceived, was extremely nice and scrupulous in the punctilios of honour; and said it was pity that two gentlemen should forfeit each other's friendship, much less expose their lives for such a frivolous cause. "My dear count! cried the Westphalian, I am charmed to find your sentiments so conformable to my own: in an honourable cause, I despise all danger; my courage, thank Heaven! has been manifested in many public engagements as well as in private rencounters; but, to break with my friend, whose eminent virtues I admire, and even to seek his life, on such a scandalous occasion, for a little insignificant whore, who, I suppose, took the advantage of our intoxication, to foment the quarrel: by Heaven! my conscience cannot digest it."

Having expressed himself to this purpose, he waited impatiently for the reply of Ferdinand, who after a pause of deliberation, offered his services in the way of mediation, though he observed, it was a matter of great delicacy, and the event altogether uncertain. "Nevertheless, added our adventurer, I will strive to appease the knight, who, I hope will be induced by my remonstrances to forget the unlucky accident, which has so disagreeably interrupted your mutual friendship." The German thanked him for this proof of his regard, which yielded him more satisfaction on account of the chevalier than of himself: "For, by the tombs of my fathers! cried he, I have so little concern for my personal safety, that if my honour were interested, I durst oppose myself singly to the whole ban of the empire; and I am now ready, if the chevalier

requires it, to give him the rendezvous in the forest of Senlis, either on horse-back or on foot, where this contest may be terminated with the life of one or both of us."

Count Fathom, with a view to chastise the Westphalian for this rhodomontade, told him with a mortifying air of indifference, that if they were both bent upon taking the field, he would save himself the trouble of interposing farther in the affair; and desired to know the hour at which it would suit him to take the air with the baronet: the other, not a little embarrassed by this question, said with a faultering tongue, he should be proud to obey the chevalier's orders; but, at the same time, owned he should be much better pleased, if our hero would execute the pacific proposal he had made. Fathom, accordingly promised to exert himself for that purpose, returned to the knight, with whom he assumed the merit of having tranquillized the rage of an incensed barbarian, who was now disposed to a reconciliation upon equal terms: the baronet overwhelmed him with caresses and compliments upon his friendship and address; the parties met that same forenoon, as if by accident in Fathom's apartment, where they embraced each other cordially, exchanged apologies, and renewed their former correspondence.

Our adventurer thought he had good reason to congratulate himself upon the part he acted in this pacification: he was treated by both with signal marks of particular affection and esteem. The count pressed him to accept as a token of his attachment, a sword of very curious workmanship, which he had received in a present from a certain prince of the empire: the knight forced upon his finger a very splendid diamond ring, as a testimony of his gratitude and esteem: but there was still another person to be appeased, before the peace of the whole com-

pany could be established. This was no other than the abbé, from whom each of the reconciled friends received at dinner a billet couched in these words.

"I have the honour to lament the infinite chagrin and mortification that compels me to address myself in this manner to a person of your rank and eminence, whom I should do myself the pleasure of waiting upon in person; were I not prevented by the misfortune of my nose, which was last night most cruelly disarranged, by a violent contusion I had the honour to receive, in attempting to compose that unhappy *fracas*, at the house of madam la Maquerelle; and what puts the finishing stroke to my mishap, is my being rendered incapable of keeping three or four assignations with ladies of fashion, by whom I have the honour to be particularly esteemed. The disfiguration of my nose, the pain I have undergone, with the discomposure of brain which it produced, I could bear as a philosopher; but the disappointment of the ladies, my glory will not permit me to overlook: and as you know the injury was sustained in your service, I have the pleasure to hope you will not refuse to grant such reparation as will be acceptable to a gentleman who has the honour to be with inviolable attachment,

"Sir, your most devoted slave,
"PEPIN CLOTHAIRE CHARLÉ HENRI LOUIS
"BARNABE DE FUMIER.

This epistle was so equivocal, that the persons to whom it was addressed, did not know whether or not they ought to interpret the contents into a challenge; when our hero observed, that the ambiguity of his expressions, plainly proved there was a door left open for accommodation;

and proposed that they should forthwith visit the writer at his own apartment: they accordingly followed his advice, and found the abbé in his morning-gown and slippers, with three huge night-caps on his head, and a crape hat-band tied over the middle of his face, by way of bandage to his nose. He received his visitors with the most ridiculous solemnity, being still a stranger to the purport of their errand; but soon as the Westphalian declared they were come in consequence of his billet, in order to ask pardon for the undesigned offence they had given, his features retrieved their natural vivacity, and he professed himself perfectly satisfied with their polite acknowledgment. Then they condoled him upon the evil plight of his nose, and seeing some marks upon his shirt, asked with seeming concern, if he had lost any blood in the fray. To this interrogation, he replied, that he had still a sufficient quantity left for the occasions of his friends; and that he should deem it his greatest glory, to expend the last drop of it in their service.

Matters being thus amicably adjusted, they prevailed upon him to uncase his nose, which retained no signs of the outrage he had suffered; and the amusements of the day were concerted. It was in consequence of this plan, that after the comedy, they were entertained at the count's lodgings, where quadrille was proposed by the abbé, as the most innocent pastime, and the proposal was immediately embraced by all present, and by none with more alacrity than by our adventurer, who without putting forth a moiety of his terror, went home with twenty louis' clear gain: though, far from believing himself greatly superior to the rest of the party, in the artifices of play, he justly suspected that they had concealed their skill, with a view of stripping him on some other occasion; for he could not

suppose that persons of their figure and character, should be, in reality, such novices as they affected to appear.

CHAP. XXIV.

He overlooks the advances of his friends, and smarts severely for his neglect.

STEELED with this cautious maxim he guarded himself from their united endeavours, in sundry subsequent attacks, by which his first conjecture was confirmed, and still came off conqueror, by virtue of his unparallelled finesse and discretion: till at length they seemed to despair of making him their prey, and the count began to drop some hints, importing a desire of seeing him more closely united to the views and interest of their triumvirate. But Ferdinand, who was altogether selfish, and quite solitary in his prospects, discouraged all those advances; being resolved to trade upon his own bottom only, and to avoid all such connexions with any person or society whatever; much more, with a set of raw adventurers whose talents he despised. With these sentiments, he still maintained the dignity and reserve of his first appearance among them, and rather inhanced than diminished that idea of importance which he had inspired at the beginning; because besides his other qualifications, they gave him credit for the address with which he kept himself superior to their united designs.

While he thus enjoyed his pre-heminence, together with the fruits of his success at play, which he managed so discreetly, as never to incur the reputation of an adventurer; he one day, chanced to be at the ordinary, when the company was surprised by the entrance of such a figure as had never appeared before in that place. This was no other

than a person habited in the exact uniform of an English jockey. His leathern cap, cut bob, fustian frock, flannel waistcoat, buff breeches, hunting-boots and whip, were sufficient of themselves to furnish out a phænomenon for the admiration of all Paris: but these peculiarities were rendered still more conspicuous by the behaviour of the man who owned them. When he crossed the threshold of the outward door, he produced such a sound from the smack of his whip, as equalled the explosion of an ordinary cohorn; and then broke forth into the hollow of a foxhunter, which he uttered with all its variations, in a strain of vociferation, that seemed to astonish and confound the whole assembly, to whom he introduced himself and his spaniel, by exclaiming in a tone something less melodious than the cry of mackarel or live cod, "By your leave, Gentlevolks, I hope there's no offence, in an honest plain Englishman's coming with money in his pocket, to taste a bit of your Vrench frigasee and ragooze."

This declaration was made in such a wild, fantastical manner, that the greatest part of the company mistook him for some savage monster or maniac, and consulted their safety by starting up from table, and drawing their swords. The Englishman seeing such a martial apparatus produced against him, recoiled two or three steps, saying, "Waunds, a believe the people are all bewitched: what do they take me for a beast of prey; is there no body here that knows Sir Stentor Stile, or can speak to me in my own lingo?" He had no sooner pronounced these words, than the baronet, with marks of infinite surprize, ran towards him, crying, "Good Heaven! Sir Stentor, who expected to meet with you in Paris?" Upon which, the other eyeing him very earnestly, "Odds heartlikens, cried he, my neighbour Sir Giles Squirrel, as I am a living soul!" With

these words, he flew upon him like a tyger, kissed him from ear to ear, demolished his periwig, and disordered the whole œconomy of his dress, to the no small entertainment of the company.

Having well nigh stifled his countryman with embraces, and besmeared himself with pulville from head to foot, he proceeded in this manner; "Mercy upon thee, knight, thou art so transmographied and bedaubed, and bedizened, that thou mought rob thy own mother without fear of information. Look ye here now, I will be trussed, if the very bitch that was brought up in thy own bosom, knows thee again. Hey, sweetlips, here hussy, damn the tuoad, do'st n't know thy old measter. Ey, ey, thou may'st smell till Christmas. I'll be bound to be hanged, knight, if the creature's nose an't foundered by the damned stinking perfumes you have got among you."

These compliments being past, the two knights sat down by one another, and Sir Stentor being asked by his neighbour, upon what errand he had crossed the sea, gave him to understand, that he had come to France, in consequence of a wager with squire Snaffle, who had laid a thousand pounds, that he, Sir Stentor, would not travel to Paris by himself, and for a whole month, appear every day at a certain hour, in the public walks, without wearing any other dress, than that in which he saw him. "The fellor has got no more stuff in his pate, continued this polite stranger, than a jack-ass, to think I could not find my way hither, thof I could not jabber your French lingo. Ecod! the people of this country, are sharp enough to find out your meaning, when you want to spend any thing among them: and as for the matter of dress, bodikins! for a thousand pounds, I would engage to live in the midst of them, and shew myself without any cloaths at all. Odd's

heart! a true-born Englishman needs not be afeard to shew his face, nor his back-side neither, with the best Frenchman, that ever trod the ground. Thof we Englishmen don't beplaister our doublets with gold and silver, I believe as how we have our pockets better lined than most of our neighbours; and for all my bit of a fustian frock, that cost me in all but forty shillings, I believe, between you and me, knight, I have more dust in my fob, than all these powdered sparks put together. But the worst of the matter is this; here is no solid belly-timber in this country: one can't have a slice of a delicate sirloin, or nice buttock of beef, for love nor money. Apize upon them! I could get no eatables upon the ruoad, but what they call Bully, which looks like the flesh of Pharaoh's lean kine stewed into rags and tatters; and then their peajohn, peajohn, rabbet them! one would think every old woman of this kingdom hatched pidgeons from her own body."

It is not to be supposed that such an original sat unobserved. The French and other foreigners, who had never been in England, were struck dumb with amazement, at the knight's appearance and deportment; while the English guests were over-whelmed with shame and confusion, and kept a most wary silence, for fear of being recognized by their countryman. As for our adventurer, he was inwardly transported with joy at sight of this curiosity. He considered him as a genuine, rich country booby, of the right English growth, fresh as imported; and his heart throbbed with rapture, when he heard Sir Stentor value himself upon the lining of his pockets: he foresaw, indeed, that the other knight would endeavour to reserve him for his own game; but he was too conscious of his own accomplishments to think he should find great difficulty in superseding the influence of Sir Giles.

Mean while, the new comer was by his friend, helped to some ragout, which pleased his palate, so well, that he declared he should now make a hearty meal, for the first time, since he had crossed the water; and while his good humour prevailed, he drank to every individual around the table. Ferdinand seized this opportunity of insinuating himself into his favour, by saying in English, he was glad to find there was any thing in France, that was agreeable to Sir Stentor: to this compliment the knight replied with an air of surprize. "Waunds! I find here's another countryman of mine, in this here company. Sir, I am proud to see you with all my heart." So speaking, he thrust out his right hand, across the table, and shook our hero by the fist, with such violence of civility, as proved very grievous to a French marquis, who, in helping himself to soup, was jostled in such a manner, as to overturn the dividing spoon in his own bosom. The Englishman seeing the mischief he had produced, cried, "no offence, I hope," in a tone of vociferation, which the marquis in all probability misconstrued: for he began to model his features into a very sublime and peremptory look, when Fathom interpreted the apology, and at the same time, informed Sir Stentor, that although he himself had not the honour of being an Englishman, he had always entertained a most particular veneration for the country, and learned the language in consequence of that esteem.

"Blood! answered the knight, I think myself the more obliged to you for your kind opinion, than if you was my countryman in good earnest: for there be abundance of we English, no offence Sir Giles, that seem to be ashamed of their own nation, and leave their homes to come and spend their fortunes abroad, among a parcel of — you understand me, Sir,—a word to the wise, as the

saying is—" Here he was interrupted by an article of the second course, that seemed to give him great disturbance: this was a roasted leveret very strong of the fumet, which happened to be placed directly under his nose. His sense of smelling was no sooner encountered by the effluvia of this delicious fare, than he started up from the table, exclaiming, "Odd's my liver! here's a piece of carrion, that I would not offer to e'er a hound in my kennel; 'tis enough to make any christian vomit both gut and gall;" and indeed, by the wry faces he made while he ran to the door, his stomach seemed ready to justify this last assertion.

The abbé, who concluded from these symptoms of disgust, that the leveret was not sufficiently stale, began to exhibit marks of discontent, and desired that it might be brought to the other end of the table, for his examination. He accordingly hung over it with the most greedy appetite, feasting his nostrils with the steams of animal putrefaction; and at length declared that the morceau was passable, though he owned it would have been highly perfect, had it been kept another week. Nevertheless, mouths were not wanting to discuss it, insipid as it was: for in three minutes there was not a vestige to be seen of that which had offended the organs of Sir Stentor, who now resumed his place, and did justice to the desert. But what he seemed to relish better than any other part of the entertainment, was the conversation of our adventurer, whom after dinner, he begged to have the honour of treating with a dish of coffee; to the seeming mortification of his brother knight, over which Fathom exulted in his own heart.

In short, our hero, by his affability and engaging deportment, immediately gained possession of Sir Stentor's good graces: insomuch, that he desired to crack a bottle with him in the evening, and they repaired to an auberge,

whither his fellow knight accompanied them, not without manifest signs of reluctance. There the stranger gave a loose to jollity; though at first he damned the Burgundy as a poor, thin liquor, that ran through him in a twinkling, and instead of warming, cooled his heart and bowels: however, it insensibly seemed to give the lie to his imputation; for his spirits rose to a more elevated pitch of mirth and good fellowship; he sung or rather roared the Early Horn so as to alarm the whole neighbourhood, and began to slabber his companions, with a most bearlike affection. Yet, whatever haste he made to the goal of ebriety, he was distanced by his brother baronet, who from the beginning of the party had made little other use of his mouth, than to receive the glass, and now sunk down upon the floor, in a state of temporary annihilation.

He was immediately carried to bed by the direction of Ferdinand, who now saw himself in a manner possessor of that mine, to which he had made such eager and artful advances. That he might, therefore, carry on the approaches in the same cautious manner, he gradually shook off the trammels of sobriety, gave a loose to that spirit of freedom, which good liquor commonly inspires, and in the familiarity of drunkenness, owned himself head of a noble family of Poland, from which he had been obliged to absent himself on account of an affair of honour, not yet compromised.

Having made this confession, and laid strong injunctions of secresy upon Sir Stentor, his countenance seemed to acquire from every succeeding glass, a new symptom of intoxication: they renewed their embraces, swore eternal friendship from that day, and swallowed fresh bumpers, till both being in all appearance, quite over-powered, they began to yawn in concert, and even nod in their chairs. The

knight seemed to resent the attacks of slumber, as so many impertinent attempts to interrupt their entertainment; he cursed his own propensity to sleep, imputing it to the damned French climate, and proposed to engage in some pastime that would keep them awake. "Odd's flesh! cried the Briton, when I'm at home, I defy all the devils in hell to fasten my eye-lids together, if so be as I am otherwise inclined. For there's mother and sister Nan, and brother Numps, and I continue to divert ourselves at all fours, brag, cribbidge, tetotum, hussle-cap, and chuck-varthing; and tho'f I say it, that should n't say it, I won't turn my back to e'er a he in England, at any of these pastimes: and so count, if you are so disposed, I am your man, that is in the way of friendship, at which of these you shall please to pitch upon."

To this proposal Fathom replied, he was quite ignorant of all the games he had mentioned; but, in order to amuse Sir Stentor, he would play with him at lansquenet, for a trifle, as he had laid it down for a maxim, to risk nothing considerable at play. "Waunds, answered the knight, I hope you don't think I come here in quest of money. Thank God! I have a good landed estate worth five thousand a year, and owe no man a halfpenny; and I question whether there be many counts in your nation, no offence, I hope, that can say a bolder word. As for your lambskin net, I know nothing of the matter: but I will toss up with you for a guinea, cross or pile as the saying is, or if there's such a thing in this country as a box and dice, I love to hear the bones rattle sometimes."

Fathom found some difficulty in concealing his joy, at the mention of this last amusement, which had been one of his chief studies, and in which he had made such progress, that he could calculate all the chances with the ut-

most exactness and certainty. However, he made shift to contain himself, within due bounds, and with seeming indifference, consented to pass away an hour at hazard, provided the implements could be procured. Accordingly, the landlord was consulted, and their desire gratified; the dice were produced, and the table resounded with the effects of their mutual eagerness. Fortune, at first, declared for the Englishman, who was permitted by our adventurer to win twenty broad pieces; and he was so elated with his success, as to accompany every lucky throw with a loud burst of laughter, and other savage and simple manifestations of excessive joy, exclaiming in a tone something less sweet than the bellowing of a bull; "Now for the main, count,—odd! here they come—here are the seven black stars, i'faith. Come along my yellow boys—odd's heart! I never liked the face of Lewis before."

Fathom drew happy presages from these boyish raptures, and after having indulged them for some time, began to avail himself of his arithmetic, in consequence of which the knight was obliged to refund the greatest part of his winning: then he altered his note, and became as intemperate in his chagrin, as he had been before immoderate in his mirth. He cursed himself and his whole generation, damned his bad luck, stamped with his feet, upon the floor, and challenged Ferdinand to double stakes. This was a very welcome proposal to our hero, who found Sir Stentor, just such a subject as he had long desired to encounter with; the more the Englishman laid, the more he lost, and Fathom took care to inflame his passions, by certain well-timed sarcasms upon his want of judgment, 'till at length, he became quite outrageous, swore the dice were false, and threw them out at the window; pulled off his periwig, and committed it to the flames, spoke with

the most rancorous contempt of his adversary's skill, insisting upon his having stripped many a better man, for all he was a count, and threatning that before they parted, he should not only look like a Pole, but also smell like a polecat.

This was a spirit which our adventurer industriously kept up, observing that the English were dupes to all the world; and that in point of genius and address, they were no more than noisy braggadocios. In short, another pair of dice was procured; the stakes were again raised, and after several vicissitudes, fortune declared so much in favour of the knight, that Fathom lost all the money in his pocket, amounting to a pretty considerable sum. By this time, he was warmed into uncommon eagerness and impatience; being equally piqued at the success and provoking exultations of his antagonist, whom he now invited to his lodgings, in order to decide the contest: Sir Stentor complied with his request; the dispute was renewed with various success, till towards day-light, Ferdinand saw this noisy, raw, unexperienced simpleton, carry off all his ready cash, together with his jewels, and almost every thing that was valuable about his person; and to crown the whole, the victor at parting, told him with a most intolerable sneer, that so soon as the count should receive another remittance from Poland, he would give him his revenge.

CHAP. XXV.

He bears his fate like a philosopher; and contracts acquaintance with a very remarkable personage.

THIS was a proper subject for our hero to moralize upon; and accordingly, it did not pass without his remarks; he found himself fairly foiled at his own weapons, reduced to indigence in a foreign land, and, what he chiefly

regretted, robbed of all those gay expectations he had indulged from his own supposed excellence in the wiles of fraud: for, upon a little recollection, he plainly perceived he had fallen a sacrifice to the confederacy he had refused to join; and did not at all doubt that the dice were loaded for his destruction: but instead of beating his head against the wall, tearing his hair, imprecating vain curses upon himself, or betraying other frantic symptoms of despair, he resolved to accommodate himself to his fate, and profit by the lesson he had so dearly bought.

With this intention, he immediately dismissed his valet, quitted his lodgings, retired to an obscure street, on the other side of the river, and covering one eye with a large patch of black silk, presented himself in quality of a musician, to the director of the opera, who upon hearing a trial of his skill, received him into the band, without further question. While he continued in this situation, he not only improved his taste and execution in musick, but likewise found frequent opportunities to extend his knowledge of mankind; for, besides the employment he exercised in public, he was often concerned in private concerts that were given in the hotels of noblemen; by which means, he became more and more acquainted with the persons, manners and characters of high life, which he contemplated with the most industrious attention, as a spectator, who being altogether unconcerned in the performance, is at more liberty to observe and enjoy the particulars of the entertainment.

It was in one of those assemblies, he had the pleasure of seeing his friend Sir Stentor, dressed in the most fashionable manner, and behaving with all the overstrained politesse of a native Frenchman: he was accompanied by his brother knight and the abbé, and this triumvirate, even

in Fathom's hearing, gave a most ludicrous detail of the finesse they had practised upon the Polish count, to their entertainer, who was ambassador from a certain court, and made himself extremely merry with the particulars of the relation. Indeed, they made shift to describe some of the circumstances in such a ridiculous light, that our adventurer himself, smarting as he was with the disgrace, could not help laughing in secret at the account. He afterwards made it his business to enquire into the characters of the two British knights, and understood they were notorious sharpers, who had come abroad for the good of their country, and now hunted in couple among a French pack, that dispersed themselves through the public ordinaries, walks, and spectacles, in order to make a prey of incautious strangers.

The pride of Ferdinand was piqued at this information; and he was even animated with the desire of making reprisals upon this fraternity, from which he ardently longed to retrieve his honour and effects: but, the issue of his last adventure had reinforced his caution; and for the present, he found means to suppress the dictates of his avarice and ambition; resolving to employ his whole penetration in reconnoitring the ground, before he should venture to take the field again. He therefore, continued to act the part of a one-eyed fidler, under the name of Fadini, and lived with incredible frugality, that he might save a purse for his future operations. In this manner had he proceeded for the space of ten months, during which, he acquired a competent knowledge of the city of Paris, when his curiosity was attracted by certain peculiarities in the appearance of a man, who lived in one of the upper apartments belonging to the house, in which he himself had fixed his habitation.

This was a tall, thin, meagre figure, with a long black beard, an aquiline nose, a brown complexion, and a most piercing vivacity in his eyes: he seemed to be about the age of fifty, wore the Persian habit, and there was a remarkable severity in his aspect and demeanour. He and our adventurer had been fellow-lodgers for some time, and, according to the laudable custom of these days, had hitherto remained as much estranged to one another, as if they had lived on opposite sides of the globe; but of late, the Persian seemed to regard our hero with particular attention; when they chanced to meet on the stair-case, or elsewhere, he bowed to Ferdinand with great solemnity, and complimented him with the Pas: he even proceeded in the course of this communication, to open his mouth, and salute him with a good morrow, and sometimes made the common remarks upon the weather. Fathom, who was naturally complaisant, did not discourage these advances: on the contrary, he behaved to him with marks of particular respect, and one day, desired the favour of his company to breakfast.

This invitation the stranger declined with due acknowledgment, on pretence of being out of order; and in the mean time, our adventurer bethought himself of questioning the landlord concerning his outlandish guest. His curiosity was rather inflamed than satisfied with the information he could obtain from this quarter; for, all he learned, was, that the Persian went by the name of Ali Beker, and that he had lived in the house, for the space of four months, in a most solitary and parsimonious manner, without being visited by one living soul; that, for sometime after his arrival, he had been often heard to groan dismally in the night, and even to exclaim in an unknown language, as if he had laboured under some grievous

affliction; and though the first transports of his grief had subsided, it was easy to perceive, he still indulged a deep rooted melancholy, for the tears were frequently observed to trickle down his beard. The commissaire of the quarter, had at first ordered this Oriental to be watched in his outgoings, according to the maxims of the French police; but his life was found so regular and inoffensive, that this precaution was soon set aside.

Any man of humane sentiments, from the knowledge of these particulars, would have been prompted to offer his services to the forlorn stranger: but as our hero was devoid of all these infirmities of human nature, it was necessary that other motives should produce the same effect: his curiosity, therefore, joined with the hopes of converting the confidence of Ali to his own emolument, effectually impelled him towards his acquaintance; and in a little time, they began to relish the conversation of each other: for, as the reader may have already observed, Fathom possessed all the arts of insinuation; and had discernment enough to perceive an air of dignity in the Persian, which the humility of his circumstances could not conceal. He was, moreover, a man of good understanding, not without a tincture of letters, perfectly well-bred, though in a ceremonious stile, extremely moral in his discourse, and scrupulously nice in his notions of honour.

Our hero conformed himself in all respects, to the other's opinions, and managed his discretions so as to pass upon him, for a gentleman reduced by misfortunes, to the exercise of an employment which was altogether unsuitable to his birth and quality. He made earnest and repeated tenders of his good offices to the stranger, and pressed him to make use of his purse, with such cordial perseverance, that at length Ali's reserve was overcome,

and he condescended to borrow of him a small sum, which, in all probability, saved his life; for he had been driven to the utmost extremity of want before he would accept of this assistance.

Fathom, having gradually stole into his good graces, began to take notice of many piteous sighs that escaped him, in the moments of their intercourse, and seemed to denote an heart fraught with woe; and on pretence of administring consolation and counsel, begged leave to know the cause of his distress; observing that his mind would be disburthened by such communication, and perhaps his grief alleviated by some means which they might jointly concert, and execute in his behalf.

Ali, thus sollicited, would often shake his head with marks of extreme sorrow and despondence, and while the tears gushed from his eyes, declared that his distress was beyond the power of any remedy but death, and that by making our hero his confident, he should only extend his unhappiness to a friend, without feeling the least remission of his own torture. Notwithstanding these repeated declarations, Ferdinand, who was well enough acquainted with the mind of man, to know that such importunity is seldom or never disagreeable, redoubled his instances, together with his expressions of sympathy and esteem, until the stranger was prevailed upon to gratify his curiosity and benevolence. Having therefore, secured the chamber-door, one night, while all the rest of the family was asleep, the unfortunate Ali disclosed himself in these words.

CHAP. XXVI.

The history of the noble Castilian:

I SHOULD be ungrateful as well as unwise, did I longer resist the desire you express to know the particulars of that destiny, which hath driven me to this miserable disguise, and rendered me in all considerations, the most wretched of men. I have felt your friendship, am confident of your honour, and though my misfortunes are such as can never be repaired, because I am utterly cut off from hope, which is the wretch's last comfort, yet I may by your means, be enabled to bear them with some degree of fortitude and resignation.

Know then, my name is not Ali; neither am I of Persian extraction. I had once the honour to own myself a Castilian, and was, under the appellation of Don Diego de Zelos, respected as the head of one of the most ancient families of that kingdom. Judge then how severe that distress must be, which compels a Spaniard to renounce his country, his honours and his name. My youth was not spent in inglorious ease, neither did it waste unheeded in the rolls of fame: before I had attained the age of nineteen, I was twice wounded in battle; I once fortunately recovered the standard of the regiment to which I belonged, after it had been seized by the enemy; and at another occasion made shift to save the life of my colonel when he lay at the mercy of an enraged barbarian.

He that thinks I recapitulate these particulars, out of ostentation, does wrong to the unhappy Don Diego de Zelos, who in having performed these little acts of gallantry, thinks he has done nothing, but simply approved himself worthy of being called a Castilian. I mean only to

do justice to my own character, and to make you acquainted with one of the most remarkable incidents of my life. It was my fate, during my third campaign, to command a troop of horse in the regiment of Don Gonzales Orgullo, between whom and my father a family-feud had long been maintained with great enmity; and that gentleman did not leave me without reason to believe he rejoiced at the opportunity of exercising his resentment upon his adversary's son; for he with-held from me that countenance which my fellow officers enjoyed, and found means to subject me to divers mortifications, of which I was not at liberty to complain. These I bore in silence, for some time, as part of my probation in the character of a soldier; resolved nevertheless, to employ my interest at court, for a removal into another corps, and to take some future opportunity of explaining my sentiments to Don Gonzales, upon the injustice of his behaviour.

While I animated myself with these sentiments, against the discouragements I underwent, and the hard duty to which I was daily exposed, it was our fate to be concerned in the battle of Saragossa, where our regiment was so severely handled by the English infantry, that it was forced to give ground with the loss of one half of its officers and men. Don Gonzales, who acted as brigadier in another wing, being informed of our fate, and dreading the disgrace of his corps, which had never turned back to the enemy, put spurs to his horse, and riding across the field at full speed, rallied our broken squadrons, and led us back to the charge, with such intrepidity of behaviour, as did not fail to inspire us all with uncommon courage and alacrity: for my own part, I thought myself doubly interested, to distinguish my valour; not only on account of my own glory, but likewise on the supposition, that as I

was acting under the eye of Gonzales, my conduct would be narrowly observed.

I therefore exerted myself with unusual vigour, and as he began the attack with the remains of my troop, fought close by his side, during the rest of the engagement. I even acquired his applause in the very heat of battle: when his hat was struck off, and his horse fell under him, I accommodated and remounted him upon my own, and having seized for my own use, another that belonged to a common trooper, attended this stern commander as before, and seconded him in all his repeated efforts: but it was impossible to withstand the numbers and impetuosity of the foe, and Don Gonzales having had the mortification to see his regiment cut in pieces, and the greatest part of the army routed, was fain to yield to the fortune of the day; yet he retired as became a man of honour and a Castilian: that is, he marched off with great deliberation, in the rear of the Spanish troops, and frequently faced about to check the pursuit of the enemy. Indeed, this exercise of his courage had well nigh cost him his life; for, in one of these wheelings, he was left almost alone, and a small party of the Portuguese horse had actually cut off our communication with the retreating forces of Spain.

In this dilemma, we had no other chance for saving our lives and liberty, than that of opening a passage sword in hand; and this is what Gonzales instantly resolved to attempt. We accordingly recommended our souls to God, and charging the line abreast of another, bore down all opposition, and were in a fair way of accomplishing our retreat, without further danger; but the gallant Orgullo, in crossing a ditch, had the misfortune to be thrown from his horse, and was almost the same instant overtaken by one of the Portuguese dragoons, whose sword was already

suspended over his head, as he lay half-stunned with his fall; when I rode up, discharged a pistol in the ruffian's brain, and seating my colonel on his horse, had the good fortune to conduct him to a place of safety.

Here he was provided with such accommodation as his case required: for, he had been wounded in the battle, and dangerously bruised by his fall, and when all the necessary steps were taken towards his recovery, I desired to know if he had any further commands for his service, being resolved to join the army without delay. I thought proper to communicate this question, by message, because he had not spoke one word to me, during our retreat, notwithstanding the good office he had received at my hands; a reserve which I attributed to his pride, and resented accordingly. He no sooner understood my intention, than he desired to see me in his apartment, and as near as I can remember spoke to this effect.

"Were your father Don Alonzo alive, I should now, in consequence of your behaviour, banish every suggestion of resentment, and sollicit his friendship, with great sincerity. Yes, Don Diego, your virtue hath triumphed over that enmity I bore your house, and I upbraid myself with the ungenerous treatment you have suffered under my command. But it is not enough for me to withdraw that rigour which it was unjust to exercise, and would be wicked to maintain: I must likewise atone for the injuries you have sustained, and make some suitable acknowledgement for that life which I have twice to-day owed to your valour and generosity. Whatever interest I have at court, shall be employed in your behalf; and I have other designs in your favour, which shall be disclosed in due season. Mean while, I desire you will still add one obligation to the debt which I have already incurred, and carry this

billet, in person, to my Estifania, who from the news of this fatal overthrow, must be in despair upon my account."

So saying, he presented a letter, directed to his lady, which I received in a transport of joy, with expressions suitable to the occasion, and immediately set out for his country-house, which happened to be about thirty leagues from the spot. This expedition was equally glorious and interesting: for my thoughts upon the road were engrossed by the hope of seeing Don Orgullo's daughter and heiress Antonia, who was reported to be a young lady of great beauty, and the most amiable accomplishments. However ridiculous it may seem, for a man to conceive a passion for an object which he hath never beheld, certain it is, my sentiments were so much prepossessed by the fame of her qualifications, that I must have fallen a victim to her charms, had they been much less powerful than they were. Notwithstanding the fatigues I had undergone in the field, I closed not an eye, until I arrived at the gate of Gonzales, being determined to precede the report of the battle, that madam d'Orgullo might not be alarmed for the life of her husband.

I declared my errand, and was introduced into a saloon, where I had not waited above three minutes, when my colonel's lady appeared, and in great confusion, received the letter, exclaiming, "Heaven grant that Don Gonzales be well!" In reading the contents, she underwent a variety of agitations; but when she had perused the whole, her countenance regained its serenity, and regarding me with an air of ineffable complacency, "Don Diego, said she, while I lament the national calamity, in the defeat of our army, I at the same time, feel the most sincere pleasure, in seeing you upon this occasion, and according to the direc-

tions of my dear lord, bid you heartily welcome to this house, as his preserver and friend. I was not unacquainted with your character, before this last triumph of your virtue, and have often prayed to Heaven, for some lucky determination of that fatal quarrel, which raged so long between the family of Gonzales and your father's house. My prayers have been heard, the long wished-for reconciliation is now effected, and I hope nothing will ever intervene, to disturb this happy union."

To this polite and affectionate declaration, I made such a reply, as became a young man, whose heart overflowed with joy and benevolence, and desired to know how soon her answer to my commander would be ready, that I might gratify his impatience, with all possible dispatch. After having thanked me for this fresh proof of my attachment, she begged I would retire into a chamber, and repose myself from the uncommon fatigues I must have undergone; but, finding I persisted in the resolution of returning to Don Gonzales, without allowing myself the least benefit of sleep, she left me engaged in conversation with an uncle of Don Gonzales, who lodged in the house, and gave orders that a collation should be prepared in another apartment, while she retired to her closet, and wrote a letter to her husband.

In less than an hour from my first arrival, I was introduced into a most elegant dining-room, where a magnificent entertainment was served up, and where we were joined by Donna Estifania, and her beautiful daughter the fair Antonia, who advancing, with the most amiable sweetness, thanked me in very warm expressions of acknowledgment, for the generosity of my conduct towards her father. I had been ravished with her first appearance, which far exceeded my imagination, and my faculties

were so disordered by this address, that I answered her compliment with the most aukward confusion. But this disorder did not turn to my prejudice in the opinion of that lovely creature, who has often told me in the sequel, that she gave herself credit for that perplexity in my behaviour, and that I never appeared more worthy of her regard and affection, than at that juncture, when my dress was discomposed, and my whole person disfigured by the toils and duty of the preceding day; for this very dishabille presented itself to her reflexion as the immediate effect of that very merit by which I was intitled to her esteem.

Wretch that I am! to survive the loss of such an excellent woman, endeared to my remembrance by the most tender offices of wedlock, happily exercised for the space of five and twenty years! Forgive these tears, they are not the drops of weakness, but remorse. Not to trouble you with idle particulars, suffice it to say, I was favoured with such marks of distinction, by madam d'Orgullo, that she thought it incumbent upon her to let me know, she had not over-acted her hospitality, and while we sat at table, accosted me in these words: "You will not be surprised, Don Diego, at my expressions of regard, which I own are unusual from a Spanish lady to a young cavalier like you, when I communicate the contents of this letter from Don Gonzales." So saying, she put the billet into my hand, and I read these words, or words to this effect.

"Amiable Estifania,

"You will understand, that I am as well as a person can possibly be, who hath this day lived to see the army of his king defeated. If you would know the particulars of this unfortunate action, your curiosity will be gratified by the

bearer Don Diego de Zelos, to whose virtue and bravery I am twice indebted for my life. I therefore desire you will receive him with that respect and gratitude, which you shall think due for such an obligation; and in entertaining him, dismiss that reserve, which often disgraces the Spanish hospitality. In a word, let your own virtue and beneficence conduct you upon this occasion, and let my Antonia's endeavours be joined with your own, in doing honour to the preserver of her father. Adieu."

Such a testimonial could not fail of being very agreeable to a young soldier, who by this time, had begun to indulge the transporting hope of being happy in the arms of the adorable Antonia. I professed myself extremely happy in having met with an opportunity of acquiring such a degree of my colonel's esteem, entertained them with a detail of his personal prowess in the battle, and answered all their questions with that moderation which every man ought to preserve in speaking of his own behaviour. Our repast being ended, I took my leave of the ladies, and at parting received a letter from Donna Estifania to her husband, together with a ring of great value, which she begged I would accept, as a token of her esteem. Thus loaded with honour and caresses, I set out on my return for the quarters of Don Gonzales, who could scarce credit his own eyes when I delivered his lady's billet; for he thought it impossible to perform such a journey in so short a time.

When he had glanced over the paper, "Don Diego, said he, by your short stay, one would imagine you had met with indifferent reception at my house: I hope Estifania has not been deficient in her duty." I answered this question, by assuring him, my entertainment had been so

agreeable in all respects, that nothing but my duty to him, could have induced me to give it up so soon. He then turned the conversation upon Antonia, and hinted his intention of giving her in marriage to a young cavalier, for whom he had a particular friendship. I was so much affected by this insinuation, which seemed at once to blast all my hopes of love and happiness, that the blood forsook my face; I was seized with an universal trepidation, and even obliged to retire, on pretence of being suddenly taken ill.

Though Gonzales seemed to impute this disorder to fatigue and want of rest, he in his heart ascribed it to the true cause, and after having sounded my sentiments to his own satisfaction, blessed me with a declaration, importing that I was the person upon whom he had pitched for a son-in-law. I will not trouble you with a repetition of what passed on this interesting occasion, but proceed to observe, that his intention in my favour was far from being disagreeable to his lady; and that, in a little time, I had the good fortune to espouse the charming Antonia, who submitted to the will of her father without reluctance.

Soon after this happy event, I was, by the influence of Don Gonzales, joined to my own interest, promoted to the command of a regiment, and served with honour during the remaining part of the war. After the treaty of Utrecht, I was employed in reducing the Catalans to their allegiance, and in an action with these obstinate rebels, had the misfortune to lose my father-in-law, who by that time was preferred to the rank of a major-general. The virtuous Estifania did not long survive this melancholy accident; and the loss of these indulgent parents, made such a deep impression upon the tender heart of my Antonia, that I took the first opportunity of removing her

from a place, in which every object served to cherish her grief, to a pleasant villa, near the city of Seville, which I purchased on account of its agreeable situation. That I might the more perfectly enjoy the possession of my amiable partner, who could no longer brook the thoughts of another separation, peace was no sooner re-established, than I obtained leave to resign my commission, and I wholly devoted myself to the joys of a domestic life.

Heaven seemed to smile upon our union, by blessing us with a son, whom, however, it was pleased to recall in his infancy, to our unspeakable grief and mortification; but, our mutual chagrin was afterwards alleviated, by the birth of a daughter, who seemed born with every accomplishment to excite the love and admiration of mankind. Why did nature debase such a master-piece with the mixture of an allay, which hath involved herself and her whole family in perdition? but the ways of Providence are unsearchable. She hath paid the debt of her degeneracy; peace be with her soul! the honour of my family is vindicated; though by a sacrifice which hath robbed me of every thing else that is valuable in life, and ruined my peace past all redemption. Yes, my friend, all the tortures that human tyranny can inflict, would be ease, tranquillity and delight, to the unspeakable pangs and horrors I have felt.

But, to return from this digression: Serafina, which was the name of that little darling, as she grew up, not only disclosed all the natural graces of external beauty, but likewise manifested the most engaging sweetness of disposition, and a capacity for acquiring with ease, all the accomplishments of her sex. 'Tis impossible to convey any adequate idea of a parent's raptures in the contemplation of such a fair blossom; she was the only pledge of our love, she was presumptive heiress to a large fortune, and likely

to be the sole representative of two noble Castilian families. She was the delight of all who saw her, and a theme of praise for every tongue. You are not to suppose, that the education of such a child was neglected. Indeed it wholly engrossed the attention of me and my Antonia, and her proficiency rewarded our care. Before she had attained the age of fifteen, she was mistress of every elegant qualification, natural and acquired. Her person was, by that time, the confessed pattern of beauty. Her voice was enchantingly sweet, and she touched the lute with the most ravishing dexterity. Heaven and earth! how did my breast dilate with joy, at the thoughts of having given birth to such perfection! how did my heart gush with paternal fondness, whenever I beheld this ornament of my name! and what scenes of endearing transport, have I enjoyed with my Antonia, in mutual congratulations upon our parental happiness.

Serafina, accomplished as she was, could not fail to make conquests among the Spanish cavaliers, who are famous for sensibility in love. Indeed, she never appeared without a numerous train of admirers, and though we had bred her up in that freedom of conversation and intercourse, which holds a middle space, between the French license and Spanish restraint, she was now so much exposed to the addresses of promiscuous gallantry, that we found it necessary to retrench the liberty of our house; and behave to our male visitants with great reserve and circumspection, that our honour and peace might run no risque from the youth and inexperience of our daughter.

This caution produced overtures from a great many young gentlemen of rank and distinction, who courted my alliance by demanding Serafina in marriage; and from the number, I had actually selected one person, who was

in all respects worthy the possession of such an inestimable prize. His name was Don Manuel de Mendoza; his birth was noble, and his character dignified with repeated acts of generosity and virtue. Yet, before I would signify to him my approbation of his suit, I resolved to inform myself, whether or not the heart of Serafina was totally unengaged, and indifferent to any other object, that I might not lay a tyrannical restraint upon her inclinations. The result of my enquiry was a full conviction of her having hitherto been deaf to the voice of love; and this piece of information, together with my own sentiments in his favour, I communicated to Don Manuel, who heard these tidings with transports of gratitude and joy. He was immediately favoured with opportunities of acquiring the affection of my daughter, and his endeavours were at first received with such respectful civility, as might have been easily warmed into a mutual passion, had not the evil genius of our family interposed.

O my friend! how shall I describe the depravity of that unhappy virgin's sentiments! how recount the particulars of my own dishonour! I that am descended from a long line of illustrious Castilians, who never received an injury they did not revenge; but washed away every blemish in their fame, with the blood of those who attempted to stain it. In that circumstance, I have imitated the example of my glorious progenitors; and that consideration alone, hath supported me against all the assaults of despair.

As I grudged no pains and expence in perfecting the education of Serafina, my doors were open to every person who made an extraordinary figure in the profession of those amusing sciences, in which she delighted. The house of Don Diego de Zelos was a little academy for painting, poetry and musick; and Heaven decreed that it

should fall a sacrifice to its regard for these fatal and delusive arts. Among other preceptors, it was her fate to be under the instruction of a cursed German; who, though his profession was drawing, understood the elements and theory of musick, possessed a large fund of learning and taste, and was a person remarkable for his agreeable conversation. This traitor, who like you, had lost one eye, I not only admitted into my house, for the improvement of my daughter, but even distinguished with particular marks of confidence and favour; little thinking he had either inclination or capacity to debauch the sentiments of my child. I was rejoiced beyond measure, to see with what alacrity she received his lessons, with what avidity she listened to his discourse, which was always equally moral, instructing and entertaining.

Antonia seemed to vie with me, in expressions of regard for this accomplished stranger, whom she could not help supposing to be a person of rank and family, reduced to his present situation, by some unfortunate vicissitude of fate. I was disposed to concur with this opinion, and actually conjured him to make me his confident, with such protestations, as left him no room to doubt my honour and beneficence; but he still persisted in declaring himself the son of an obscure mechanic in Bohemia; an origin to which surely no man would pretend, who had the least claim to nobility of birth. While I was thus undeceived in my conjecture, touching his birth and quality, I was confirmed in an opinion of his integrity and moderation, and looked upon him as a man of honour, in despite of the lowness of his pedigree. Nevertheless he was at bottom, a most perfidious wretch, and all this modesty and self-denial were the effects of the most villainous dissimulation, a cloak under which he unsuspected robbed me of my honour and my peace.

Not to trouble you with particulars, the recital of which would tear my heart-strings with indignation and remorse, I shall only observe, that by the power of his infernal insinuation, he fascinated the heart of Serafina, brought over Antonia herself to the interests of his passion, and at once detached them both from their duty and religion. Heaven and earth! how dangerous, how irresistible is the power of infatuation! while I remained in the midst of this blind security, waiting for the nuptials of my daughter, and indulging myself with the vain prospect of her approaching felicity, Antonia found means to protract the negociation of the marriage, by representing that it would be pity to deprive Serafina of the opportunity she then had of profiting by the German's instructions; and upon that account I prevailed upon Don Manuel to bridle the impatience of his love.

During this interval, as I one evening enjoyed the cool air in my own garden, I was accosted by an old duenna, who had been my nurse, and lived in the family since the time of my childhood. "My duty, said she, will no longer permit me to wink in silence, at the wrongs I see you daily suffer. Dismiss that German from your house, without delay, if you respect the glory of your name, and the rights of our holy religion: the stranger is an abominable heretic; and, grant Heaven! he may not have already poisoned the minds of those you hold most dear." I had been extremely alarmed at the beginning of this address, but finding the imputation limited to the article of religion, in which, thank God, I am no bigot, I recovered my serenity of disposition, thanked the old woman for her zeal, commended her piety, and encouraged her to persevere in making observations on such subjects as should concern my honour and my quiet.

We live in such a world of wickedness and fraud, that

a man cannot be too vigilant in his own defence: had I employed such spies from the beginning, I should, in all probability, have been at this day in possession of every comfort that renders life agreeable. The duenna thus authorized, employed her sagacity with such success, that I had reason to suspect the German of a design upon the heart of Serafina; but, as the presumptions did not amount to conviction, I contented myself with exiling him from my house, under the pretext of having discovered, that he was an enemy to the catholic church; and forthwith appointed a day for the celebration of my daughter's marriage, with Don Manuel de Mendoza. I could easily perceive a cloud of melancholy overspread the faces of Serafina and her mother, when I declared these my resolutions; but, as they made no objection to what I proposed, I did not, at that time, enter into an explanation of the true motives that influenced my conduct. Both parties were, probably, afraid of such expostulation.

Mean while, preparations were made for the spousals of Serafina; and, notwithstanding the anxiety I had undergone, on account of her connexion with the German, I began to think that her duty, her glory, had triumphed over all such low-born considerations, if ever they had been entertained; because she and even Antonia seemed to expect the ceremony with resignation, though the features of both still retained evident marks of concern, which I willingly imputed to the mutual prospect of their separation. This, however, was but a faithless calm, that soon, ah! too soon, brought forth a tempest, which hath wrecked my hopes.

Two days before the appointed union of Don Manuel and Serafina, I was informed by the duenna, that while she accompanied Antonia's waiting-maid at church, she had

seen her receive a billet from an old woman, who, kneeling at her side, had conveyed it in such a mysterious manner, as wakened the duenna's apprehensions about her young lady; she had therefore hastened home to communicate this piece of intelligence, that I might have an opportunity of examining the messenger before she should have time to deposit her trust. I could not help shivering with fearful presages, upon this occasion, and even abhorring the person to whose duty and zeal I was beholden for the intelligence, even while I endeavoured to persuade myself, that the inquiry would end in the detection of some paultry intrigue, between the maid and her own gallant, I intercepted her in returning from church, and commanding her to follow me to a convenient place, extorted from her by dint of threats, the fatal letter, which I read to this effect.

"The whole business of my life, O divine Serafina! will be to repay that affection I have been so happy as to engage. With what transport then shall I obey your summons, in performing that enterprize, which will rescue you from the bed of a detested rival, and put myself in full possession of a jewel, which I value infinitely more than life. Yes, adorable creature, I have provided every thing for our escape, and at midnight will attend you in your own apartment, from whence you shall be conveyed into a land of liberty and peace, where you will unmolested enjoy the purity of that religion you have espoused, and in full security bless the arms of your ever faithful.

"ORLANDO."

Were you a fond parent, a tender husband and a noble Castilian, I should not need to mention the unutterable horrors that took possession of my bosom, when I perused

this accursed letter, by which I learned the apostasy, disobedience, and degeneracy of my idolized Serafina, who had overthrown and destroyed the whole plan of felicity which I had erected, and blasted all the glories of my name; and when the wretched messenger, terrified by my menaces and agitation, confessed that Antonia herself was privy to the guilt of her daughter, whom she had solemnly betrothed to that vile German, in the sight of Heaven, and that by her connivance, this plebeian intended that very night, to bereave me of my child; I was for some moments stupified with grief and amazement, that gave way to an extasy of rage, which had well-nigh terminated in despair and distraction.

I now tremble, and my head grows giddy with the remembrance of that dreadful occasion: behold how the drops trickle down my forehead; this agony is a fierce and familiar visitant, I shall banish it anon. I summoned my pride, my resentment to my assistance; these are the cordials that support me against all other reflections; those were the auxiliaries that enabled me in the day of trial, to perform that sacrifice which my honour demanded, in a strain so loud, as to drown the cries of nature, love and compassion. Yes, they espoused that glory, which humanity would have betrayed, and my revenge was noble, though unnatural.

My scheme was soon laid, my resolution soon taken; I privately confined the wretch who had been the industrious slave of this infamous conspiracy, that she might take no step to frustrate, or interrupt the execution of my design. Then repairing to the house of an apothecary, who was devoted to my service, communicated my intention, which he durst not condemn, and could not reveal, without breaking the oath of secrecy I had imposed; and he

furnished me with two vials of poison, for the dismal catastrophe I had planned. Thus provided, I on pretence of sudden business at Seville, carefully avoided the dear, the wretched pair, whom I had devoted to death, that my heart might not relent, by means of those tender ideas, which the sight of them would have infallibly inspired; and when day-light vanished, took my station near that part of the house, through which the villain must have entered, on his hellish purpose. There I stood in a state of horrid expectation, my soul ravaged with the different passions that assailed it, until the fatal moment arrived; when I perceived the traitor approach the window of a lower apartment, which led into that of Serafina, and gently lifting the casement, which was purposely left unsecured, insinuate half of his body into the house: then rushing upon him, in a transport of fury, I plunged my sword into his heart, crying "Villain! receive the reward of thy treachery and presumption."

The steel was so well aimed as to render a repetition of the stroke unnecessary; he uttered one groan, and fell breathless at my feet. Exulting with this first success of my revenge, I penetrated into the chamber, where the robber of my peace was expected by the unhappy Serafina and her mother, who seeing me enter with a most savage aspect, and a sword reeking with the vengeance I had taken, seemed almost petrified with fear. "Behold, said I, the blood of that base plebeian, who made an attempt upon the honour of my house: your conspiracy against the unfortunate Don Diego de Zelos, is now discovered; that presumptuous slave, the favoured Orlando, is now no more."

Scarce had I pronounced these words, when a loud scream was uttered by both the unhappy victims. "If Or-

lando is slain, cried the infatuated Serafina, what have I to do with life? O my dear lord! my husband, and my lover! how are our promised joys at once cut off! here strike, my father, compleat your barbarous sacrifice, the spirit of the murdered Orlando still hovers for his wife." These frantic exclamations, in which she was joined by Antonia, kept up the fury of my resentment, which by meekness and submission might have been weakened and rendered ineffectual. "Yes, hapless wretches, I replied, ye shall enjoy your wish: the honour of my name requires that both shall die; yet I will not mangle the breast of Antonia, on which I have so often reposed; I will not shed the blood of Zelos, nor disfigure the beauteous form of Serafina, on which I have so often gazed with wonder and unspeakable delight: here is an elixir, to which I trust the consummation of my revenge."

So saying, I emptied the vials into separate cups, and presenting one in each hand, the miserable, the fair offenders, instantly received the destined draughts, which they drank without hesitation: then praying to Heaven for the wretched Don Diego, sunk upon the same couch, and expired without a groan. O well-contrived beverage! O happy composition, by which all the miseries of life are so easily cured!

Such was the fate of Antonia and Serafina; these hands were the instruments that deprived them of life, these eyes beheld them the richest prize that death had ever won. Powers supreme! does Don Diego live to make this recapitulation? I have done my duty; but ah! I am haunted by the furies of remorse: I am tortured with the incessant stings of remembrance and regret; even now the images of my wife and daughter, present themselves to my imagination. All the scenes of happiness I have en-

oyed as a lover, husband and parent, all the endearing hopes I have cherished, now pass in review before me, embittering the circumstances of my inexpressible woe; and I consider myself as a solitary outcast from all the comforts of society. But, enough of these unmanly complaints, the yearnings of nature are too importunate.

Having compleated my vengeance, I retired into my closet, and furnishing myself with some ready money and jewels of considerable value, went into the stable, saddled my favourite steed, which I instantly mounted, and before the tumults of my breast subsided, found myself at the town of St. Lucar. There I learned from inquiry, that there was a Dutch bark in the harbour ready to sail; upon which, I addressed myself to the master, who for a suitable gratification, was prevailed upon to weigh anchor that same night; so that embarking without delay, I soon bid eternal adieu to my native country. It was not from reason and reflection, that I took these measures for my personal safety; but in consequence of an involuntary instinct, that seems to operate in the animal machine, while the faculty of thinking is suspended.

To what a dreadful reckoning was I called, when reason resumed her function! you may believe me, my friend, when I assure you, that I should not have outlived those tragedies I acted, had I not been restrained from doing violence upon myself, by certain considerations, which no man of honour ought to set aside. I could not bear the thought of falling ingloriously by the hand of an executioner, and intailing disgrace upon a family that knew no stain; and I was deterred from putting an end to my own misery, by the apprehensions of posthumous censure, which would have represented me as a desponding wretch, utterly destitute of that patience, fortitude and resigna-

tion, which are the characteristics of a true Castilian. I was also influenced by religious motives, that suggested to me the necessity of living to atone by my sufferings and sorrow, for the guilt I had incurred, in complying with a savage punctilio, which is, I fear, displeasing in the sight of Heaven.

These were the reasons that opposed my entrance into that peaceful harbour, which death presented to my view; and they were soon reinforced by another principle, that sanctioned my determination, to continue at the servile oar of life. In consequence of unfavourable winds, our vessel for some days made small progress in her voyage to Holland, and near the coast of Gallicia we were joined by an English ship from Vigo, the master of which gave us to understand, that before he set sail, a courier had arrived from Madrid, at that place, with orders for the corregidor, to prevent the escape of any native Spaniard, by sea, from any port within his district; and to use his utmost endeavours to apprehend the person of Don Diego de Zelos, who was suspected of treasonable practices against the state. Such an order, with a minute description of my person, was at the same time, dispatched to all the sea-ports and frontier places in Spain.

You may easily suppose how I, who was already overwhelmed with distress, could bear this aggravation of misfortune and disgrace: I, who had always maintained the reputation of loyalty, which was acquired at the hazard of my life, and the expence of my blood. To deal candidly, I must own, that this intelligence roused me from a lethargy of grief, which had begun to overpower my faculties. I immediately imputed this dishonourable charge to the evil offices of some villain, who had basely taken advantage of my deplorable situation, and I was inflamed, in-

spirited with the desire of vindicating my fame, and revenging the injury. Thus animated, I resolved to disguise myself effectually from the observation of those spies, which every nation finds its account in employing, in foreign countries; I purchased this habit from the Dutch navigator, in whose house I kept myself concealed, after our arrival at Amsterdam, until my beard was grown to a sufficient length to favour my design, and then appeared as a Persian dealer in jewels. As I could gain no satisfactory information touching myself, in this country, had no purpose to pursue, and was extremely miserable among a people, who being mercenary and unsocial, were very ill adapted to alleviate the horrors of my condition; I gratified my landlord for his important services, with the best part of my effects; and having, by his means, procured a certificate from the magistracy, repaired to Rotterdam, from whence I set out in a travelling carriage for Antwerp, on my way to this capital; hoping with a succession of different objects, to mitigate the anguish of my mind, and by the most industrious enquiry, to learn such particulars of that false impeachment, as would enable me to take measures for my own justification, as well as for projecting a plan of revenge against the vile perfidious author.

This, I imagined, would be no difficult task, considering the friendship and intercourse subsisting between the Spanish and French nations, and the communicative disposition, for which the Parisians are renowned; but I have found myself egregiously deceived in my expectation: the officers of the Police in this city are so inquisitive and vigilant, that the most minute action of a stranger, is scrutinized with great severity; and although the inhabitants are very frank in discoursing on indifferent subjects, they are at the same time extremely cautious in avoiding all

conversation that turns upon state occurrences and maxims of government. In a word, the peculiarity of my appearance, subjects me so much to particular observation, that I have hitherto thought proper to devour my griefs in silence, and even to bear the want of almost every convenience, rather than hazard a premature discovery, by offering my jewels for sale.

In this emergency, I have been so far fortunate as to become acquainted with you, whom I look upon as a man of honour and humanity. Indeed, I was at first sight, prepossessed in your favour: for notwithstanding the mistakes which men daily commit in judging from appearances, there is something in the physiognomy of a stranger, from which one cannot help forming an opinion of his character and disposition. For once, my penetration hath not failed me; your behaviour justifies my decision, you have treated me with that sympathy and respect which none but the generous will pay to the unfortunate. I have trusted you accordingly: I have put my life, my honour in your power; and I must beg leave to depend upon your friendship, for obtaining that satisfaction, for which alone I seek to live. Your employment engages you in the gay world: you daily mingle with the societies of men; the domestics of the Spanish ambassador will not shun your acquaintance; you may frequent the coffee-houses to which they resort; and in the course of these occasions, unsuspected inform yourself of that mysterious charge which lies heavy on the fame of the unfortunate Don Diego. I must likewise, implore your assistance in converting my jewels into money, that I may breathe independent of man, until Heaven shall permit me to finish this weary pilgrimage of life.

CHAP. XXVII.

A flagrant instance of Fathom's virtue, in the manner of his retreat to England.

FATHOM, who had lent an attentive ear to every circumstance of this disastrous story, no sooner heard it concluded, than with an aspect of generous and cordial compassion, not even unattended with tears, he condoled the lamentable fate of Don Diego de Zelos; deplored the untimely death of the gentle Antonia and the fair Serafina, and undertook the interests of the wretched Castilian with such warmth of sympathizing zeal, as drew a flood from his eyes, while he wrung his benefactor's hand in a transport of gratitude. Those were literally tears of joy, or at least of satisfaction on both sides; as our hero wept with affection and attachment to the jewels that were to be committed to his care: but, far from discovering the true source of his tenderness, he affected to dissuade the Spaniard from parting with the diamonds, which he counselled him to reserve for a more pressing occasion; and in the mean time, earnestly intreated him to depend upon his friendship, for present relief. This generous proffer served only to confirm Don Diego's resolution, which he forthwith executed, by putting into the hands of Ferdinand, jewels to the value of a thousand crowns, and desiring him to detain for his own use, any part of the sum they would raise.

Our adventurer thanked him for the good opinion he entertained of his integrity, an opinion fully manifested in honouring him with such important confidence; and assured him he would transact his affairs with the utmost diligence, caution and dispatch. The evening being by

this time almost consumed, these new allies retired separately to rest: though each passed the night without repose, in very different reflections; the Castilian being, as usual, agitated with the unceasing pangs of his unalterable misery, interspersed with gleaming hopes of revenge; and Fathom being kept awake with revolving plans, for turning his fellow-lodger's credulity to his own advantage. From the nature of the Spaniard's situation, he might have appropriated the jewels to himself, and remained in Paris, without fear of a prosecution, because the injured party had, by the above narrative, left his life and liberty at discretion. But he did not think himself secure from the personal resentment of an enraged desperate Castilian; and therefore determined to withdraw himself privately into that country where he had all along proposed to fix the standard of his finesse, which fortune had now empowered him to exercise according to his wish.

Bent upon this retreat, he went abroad in the morning, on pretence of acting in the concerns of his friend Don Diego, and having hired a post-chaise to be ready at the dawn of next day, returned to his lodgings, where he cajoled the Spaniard with a feigned report of his negotiation; then securing his most valuable effects about his person, arose with the cock, repaired to the place, at which he had appointed to meet the postilion with the carriage, and set out for England without further delay; leaving the unhappy Zelos to the horrors of indigence, and the additional agony of this fresh disappointment. Yet he was not the only person affected by the abrupt departure of Fathom, which was hastened by the importunities, threats and reproaches of his landlord's daughter, whom he had debauched under promise of marriage, and now left in the fourth month of her pregnancy.

Notwithstanding the dangerous adventure in which he had been formerly involved by travelling in the night, he did not think proper to make the usual halts on this journey, for sleep or refreshment, nor did he once quit the chaise, till his arrival at Boulogne, which he reached in twenty hours after his departure from Paris. Here he thought he might safely indulge himself with a comfortable meal; accordingly, he bespoke a poulard for dinner, and while that was preparing, went forth to view the city and harbour. When he beheld the white cliffs of Albion, his heart throbbed with all the joy of a beloved son, who after a tedious and fatiguing voyage, reviews the chimneys of his father's house: he surveyed the neighbouring coast of England, with fond and longing eyes, like another Moses reconnoitring the land of Canaan from the top of mount Pisgah: and to such a degree of impatience was he enflamed by the sight, that instead of proceeding to Calais, he resolved to take his passage directly from Boulogne, even if he should hire a vessel for the purpose. With these sentiments, he inquired if there was any ship bound for England, and was so fortunate as to find the master of a small bark, who intended to weigh anchor for Deal, that same evening at high water.

Transported with this information, he immediately agreed for his passage, sold the post-chaise to his landlord for thirty guineas, as a piece of furniture, for which he could have no further use, purchased a portmanteau, together with some linen and wearing apparel, and at the recommendation of his host, took into his service, an extra-postilion or helper, who had formerly wore the livery of a travelling marquis. This new domestic, whose name was Maurice, underwent with great applause, the examination of our hero, who perceived in him, a fund of sa-

gacity and presence of mind, by which he was excellently qualified for being the valet of an adventurer; he was therefore accommodated with a second-hand suit, and another shirt, and at once listed under the banners of count Fathom, who spent the whole afternoon in giving him proper instructions for the regulation of his conduct.

Having settled these preliminaries to his own satisfaction, he and his baggage were embarked about six o'clock in the month of September, and it was not without emotion, that he found himself benighted upon the great deep, of which, before the preceding day, he had never enjoyed even the most distant prospect. However, he was not a man to be afraid, where there was really no appearance of danger; and the agreeable presages of future fortune supported his spirits, amidst the disagreeable nausea which commonly attends landmen at sea, until he was set ashore upon the beach at Deal, which he entered in good health about seven o'clock in the morning.

Like Cæsar, however, he found some difficulty in landing, on account of the swelling surf, that tumbled about with such violence, as had almost overset the cutter that carried him on shore; and in his eagerness to jump upon the strand, his foot slipped from the side of the boat, so that he was thrown forwards in an horizontal direction, and his hands were the first parts of him that touched the English ground. Upon this occasion, he, in imitation of Scipio's behaviour on the cost of Afric, hailed the omen, and grasping an handful of the sand, was heard to exclaim in the Italian language, "Ah ha, old England, I have thee fast."

As he walked up to the inn, followed by Maurice loaded with his portmanteau, he congratulated himself upon his happy voyage, and the peaceable possession of his spoil,

and could not help snuffing up the British air with marks of infinite relish and satisfaction. His first care was to recompence himself for the want of sleep he had undergone, and after he had sufficiently recruited himself with several hours of uninterrupted repose, he set out in a post-chaise for Canterbury, where he took a place in the London stage, which, he was told, would depart next morning, the coach being already full. On this very first day of his arrival, he perceived between the English and the people among whom he had hitherto lived, such essential difference in customs, appearance, and way of living, as inspired him with high notions of that British freedom, opulence, and convenience on which he had often heard his mother expatiate. On the road, he feasted his eye-sight with the verdant hills covered with flocks of sheep, the fruitful vales parcelled out into cultivated inclosures; the very cattle seemed to profit by the wealth of their masters, being large, sturdy and sleek, and every peasant breathed the insolence of liberty and independance. In a word, he viewed the wide extended plains of Kent, with a lover's eye, and his ambition becoming romantic, could not help fancying himself another conqueror of the isle.

He was not, however, long amused by these vain chimeras, which soon vanished before other reflections of more importance and solidity. His imagination, it must be owned, was at all times too chaste, to admit those overweening hopes, which often mislead the mind of a projector. He had studied mankind with incredible diligence, and knew perfectly well how far he could depend on the passions and foibles of human nature. That he might now act consistent with his former sagacity, he resolved to pass himself upon his fellow travellers, for a French gentleman, equally a stranger to the language and country of

England, in order to glean from their discourse, such intelligence as might avail him in his future operations; and his lacquey was tutored accordingly.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Some account of his fellow-travellers.

THOSE who had taken places for the coach, understanding the sixth seat was engaged by a foreigner, determined to profit by his ignorance; and with that politeness which is peculiar to this happy island, fixed themselves in the vehicle, in such a manner, before he had the least intimation of their design, that he found it barely practicable to insinuate himself sidelong between a corpulent quaker and a fat Wapping-landlady, in which attitude he stuck fast, like a thin quarto between two voluminous dictionaries on a bookseller's shelf: and as if the pain and inconvenience of such compression, was not sufficient matter of chagrin, the greatest part of the company entertained themselves with laughing at his ludicrous station.

The jolly dame at his left hand, observed with a loud exclamation of mirth, that Monsieur would be soon better acquainted with a buttock of English beef; and said by that time they should arrive at their dining place, he might be spitted without larding. "Yes, verily, replied Obadiah, who was a wag in this way, but the swine's fat will be all on one side." "So much the better for you, cried mine hostess, for that side is all your own." The quaker was not so much disconcerted by the quickness of this repartee, but that he answered with great deliberation, "I thank thee for thy love, but will not profit by thy

loss; especially as I like not the savour of these outlandish fowls; they are profane birds of passage, relished only by the children of vanity, like thee."

The plump gentlewoman took umbrage at this last expression, which she considered as a double reproach, and repeated the words "Children of vanity!" with an emphasis of resentment. "I believe, if the truth were known, said she, there's more vanity than midriff, in that great belly of yours, for all your pretending to humility and religion. Sirrah! my corporation is made up of good, wholsome English fat; but you are puffed up with the wind of vanity and delusion; and when it begins to gripe your entrails, you pretend to have a motion, and then get up and preach nonsense: yet, you'll take it upon you to call your betters children; marry come up, Mr. Goose-cap, I have got children that are as good men as you, or any hypocritical trembler in England.

A person who sat opposite to the quaker, hearing this remonstrance, which seemed pregnant with contention, interposed in the conversation with a conscious leer, and begged there might be no rupture between the spirit and the flesh. By this remonstrance, he relieved Obadiah from the satire of this female orator, and brought the whole vengeance of her elocution upon his own head. "Flesh: cried she, with all the ferocity of an enraged Thalestris, none of your names, Mr. Yellow-chaps. What! I warrant you have an antipathy to flesh, because you yourself are nothing but skin and bone. I suppose you are some poor starv'd journeyman taylor come from France, where you have been learning to cabbage, and have not seen a good meal of victuals these seven years; you have been living upon rye-bread and soup maigre, and now you come over like a walking atomy, with a rat's tail at your wig, and a

tinsy jacket; and so forsooth, you set up for a gentleman, and pretend to find fault with a sur-loin of roast beef."

The gentleman heard this address with admirable patience, and when she had rung out her alarm, very coolly replied: "Any thing but your stinking fish, Madam. Since when, I pray, have you travelled in stage-coaches, and left off your old profession of crying oysters in winter, and rotten mackarel in June? You was then known by the name of Kate Brawn, and in good repute among the alehouses in Thames-street, till that unlucky amour with the master of a corn vessel, in which he was unfortunately detected by his own spouse; but you seem to have risen by that fall; and I wish you joy of your present plight: though considering your education on Bear-key, you can give but a sorry account of yourself."

The amazon, though neither exhausted nor dismayed, was really confounded at the temper and assurance of this antagonist, who had gathered all these anecdotes from the fertility of his own invention; after a short pause, however, she poured forth a torrent of obloquy sufficient to overwhelm any person who had not been used to take up arms against such seas of trouble; and a dispute ensued, which would have not only disgraced the best orators on the Thames, but even have made a figure in the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries, during which the Athenian matrons rallied one another from different waggons, with that freedom of altercation so happily preserved in this our age and country.

Such a redundancy of epithets and variety of metaphors, tropes and figures were uttered between these well-matched opponents, that an epic bard would have found his account in listening to the contest, which, in all probability, would not have been confined to words; had

it not been interrupted for the sake of a young woman of an agreeable countenance and modest carriage; who being shocked at some of their flowers of speech, and terrified by the menacing looks and gestures of the fiery featured dame, began to scream aloud, and beg leave to quit the coach. Her perturbation put an end to the high debate. The sixth passenger, who had not opened his mouth, endeavoured to comfort her with assurances of protection; the quaker proposed a cessation of arms; the male disputant acquiesced in the proposal, assuring the company he had entered the lists for their entertainment only, without acquiring the least grudge or ill-will to the fat gentlewoman, whom he protested he had never seen before that day, and who, for aught he knew, was a person of credit and reputation. He then held forth his hand in token of amity, and asked pardon of the offended party, who was appeased by his submission; and in testimony of her benevolence, presented to the other female, whom she had discomposed, an Hungary-water bottle filled with cherry-brandy, recommending it as a much more powerful remedy, than the Sal volatile, which the other held to her nose.

Peace being thus re-established in a treaty, comprehending Obadiah and all present, it will not be improper to give the reader some further information touching the several characters assembled in this vehicle. The quaker was a London merchant, who had been at Deal, superintending the repairs of a ship, which had suffered by a storm in the Downs. The Wapping landlady, was on her return from the same place, where she had attended the payment of a man of war, with sundry powers of attorney, granted by the sailors, who had lived upon credit at her house. Her competitor in fame was a dealer in wine, a smuggler of French lace, and a petty gamester just arriv-

ed from Paris, in the company of an English barber who sat on his right hand, and the young woman was daughter of a country curate, in her way to London, where she was bound apprentice to a milliner.

Hitherto Fathom had sat in silent astonishment at the manners of his fellow-travellers, which far exceeded the notions he had pre-conceived of English plainness and rusticity: he found himself a monument of that disregard and contempt, which a stranger never fails to meet with from the inhabitants of this island; and saw with surprize, an agreeable young creature sit as solitary and unheeded as himself. He was, indeed, allured by the roses of her complexion, and the innocence of her aspect, and began to repent of having pretended ignorance of the language, by which he was restrained from exercising his eloquence upon her heart; he resolved, however, to ingratiate himself, if possible, by the courtesy and politeness of dumb shew, and for that purpose, put his eyes in motion without farther delay.

CHAP. XXIX.

Another providential deliverance, from the effects of the smuggler's ingenious conjecture.

DURING these deliberations, the wine-merchant, with a view to make a parade of his superior parts and breeding, as well as to pave the way for a match at backgammon, made a tender of his snuff-box to our adventurer, and asked in bad French, how he travelled from Paris. This question produced a series of interrogations, concerning the place of Ferdinand's abode in that city, and his business in England; so that he was fain to practise the science of defence, and answered with such am-

biguity, as arroused the suspicion of the smuggler, who began to believe our hero had some very cogent reason, for evading his curiosity: he immediately set his reflection at work, and after various conjectures, fixed upon Fathom's being the young pretender. Big with this supposition, he eyed him with the most earnest attention, comparing his features with those of the chevalier's portrait, which he had seen in France, and though the faces were as unlike as any two human faces could be, found the resemblance so striking as to dispel all his doubts, and persuade him to introduce the stranger to some Justice on the road: a step by which he would not only manifest his zeal for the protestant succession, but also acquire the splendid reward proposed by parliament, to any person who should apprehend that famous adventurer.

These ideas intoxicated the brain of this man, to such a pitch of enthusiasm, that he actually believed himself in possession of the thirty thousand pounds, and amused his fancy with a variety of magnificent projects to be executed by means of that acquisition; until his reverie was interrupted by the halting of the coach at the inn where the passengers used to eat their breakfasts. Waked as he was from the dream of happiness, it had made such impression upon his mind, that seeing Fathom rise up with an intention to alight, he took it for granted his design was to escape, and seizing him by the collar, called aloud for assistance, in the king's name.

Our hero, whose sagacity and presence of mind, very often supplied the place of courage, instead of being terrified at this assault, which might have disturbed the tranquillity of an ordinary villain, was so perfectly master of every circumstance of his own situation, as to know at once, that the aggressor could not possibly have the least

cause of complaint against him; and therefore, imputing this violence either to madness or mistake, very deliberately suffered himself to be made prisoner by the people of the house, who ran to the coach-door, in obedience to the summons of the wine-merchant. The rest of the company were struck dumb with surprize and consternation at this sudden adventure, and the quaker dreading some fell resistance on the side of the outlandish-man, unpinned the other coach-door in the twinkling of an eye, and trundled himself into the mud for safety. The others seeing the temper and resignation of the prisoner, soon recovered their recollection, and began to inquire into the cause of his arrest: Upon which the captor, whose teeth chattered with terror and impatience, gave them to understand that he was a state criminal, and demanded their help in conveying him to justice.

Luckily for both parties, there happened to be at the inn a company of squires just returned from the death of a leash of hares, which they had ordered to be dressed for dinner, and among these gentlemen was one of the Quorum, to whom the accuser had immediate recourse, marching before the captive, who walked very peaceably between the landlord and one of his waiters, and followed by a croud of spectators, some of whom had secured the faithful Maurice, who in his behaviour, closely imitated the deliberation of his master. In this order did the procession advance to the apartment in which the magistrate with his fellows of the chace, sat smoaking his morning pipe over a tankard of strong ale; and the smuggler being directed to the right person, "May it please your worship, said he, I have brought this foreigner before you, on a violent suspicion of his being a proclaimed outlaw, and I desire before these witnesses, that my title may be made

good to the reward that shall become due upon his conviction."

"Friend, replied the justice, I know nothing of you or your titles, but, this I know, if you have any information to give in, you must come to my house when I am at home, and proceed in a lawful way, that is, d'ye mind me, if you swear as how this here person is an outlaw, then if so be as he has nothing to say to the contrary, my clerk shall make out a mittimus; and so to jail with him till next size." "But Sir, answered the impeacher, this is a case that admits of no delay, the person I have apprehended, is a prisoner of consequence to the state." "How! fellor, cried the magistrate, interrupting him, is there any person of more consequence than one of his majesty's justices of the peace, who is besides, a considerable member of the landed interest? d'ye know sirrah, who you are talking to? if you don't go about your business, I believe I shall lay you by the heels."

The smuggler fearing his prize would escape, through the ignorance, pride and obstinacy of this country justice, approached his worship, and in a whisper, which was overheard by all the company, assured him, he had indubitable reason to believe the foreigner was no other than the pretender's eldest son. At mention of this formidable name, every individual of the audience started, with signs of terror and amazement. The justice dropped his pipe, recoiled upon his chair, and looking most ridiculously aghast, exclaimed, "Seize him in the name of God and his majesty king George! has he got no secret arms about him?"

Fathom being thus informed of the suspicion under which he stood, could not help smiling at the eagerness with which the spectators flew upon him; and suffered himself to be searched with great composure, well know-

ing they would find no moveables about his person, but such as upon examination, would turn to his account; he, therefore, very calmly presented to the magistrate his purse, and a small box that contained his jewels, and in the French language, desired they might be preserved from the hands of the mob. This request was interpreted by the accuser, who at the same time, laid claim to the booty; the justice took charge of the deposit, and one of his neighbours having undertaken the office of clerk, he proceeded to the examination of the culprit, whose papers were by this time laid on the table before him. "Stranger, said he, you stand charged with being son of the pretender to these realms: what have you to say in your own defence?" Our hero assured him in the French language that he was falsly impeached, and demanded justice on the accuser, who without the least reason, had made such a malicious attack upon the life and honour of an innocent gentleman.

The smuggler, instead of acting the part of a faithful interpreter, told his worship that the prisoner's answer was no more than a simple denial, which every felon would make, who had nothing else to plead in his own behalf; and that this alone was a strong presumption of his guilt; because, if he was not really the person they suspected him to be, the thing would speak for itself: for, if he was not the young pretender, who then was he? This argument had great weight with the justice, who assuming a very important aspect, observed, "Very true, friend, if you are not the pretender, in the name of God who are you? one may see with half an eye, that he is no better than a promiscuous fellow."

Ferdinand now began to repent of having pretended ignorance of the English language, as he found himself

at the mercy of a rascal, who put a false gloss upon all his words; and addressed himself to the audience successively in French, High-Dutch, Italian, and Hungarian Latin, desiring to know if any person present understood any of these tongues, that his answers might be honestly explained to the bench. But, he might have accosted them in Chinese with the same success: there was not one person present tolerably versed in his mother tongue, much less acquainted with any foreign language, except the wine-merchant, who incensed at this appeal, which he considered as an affront to his integrity, gave the judge to understand that the delinquent, instead of speaking to the purpose, contumaciously insulted his authority, in sundry foreign lingo's, which he apprehended, was an additional proof of his being the chevalier's son, inasmuch, as no person would take the pains to learn such a variety of gibberish, except with some sinister intent.

This annotation was not lost upon the squire, who was too jealous of the honour of his office, to overlook such a flagrant instance of contempt. His eyes glistened, his cheeks were inflated with rage: "The case is plain, said he; having nothing of signification to offer in his own favour, he grows refectory, and abuses the court in his base Roman catholic jargon: but I'll let you know, for all you pretend to be a prince, you are no better than an outlawed vagrant; and I'll shew you what a thing you are, when you come in composition with an English justice like me, who have more than once extinguished myself in the service of my country. As nothing else accrues, your purse, black box and papers shall be sealed up before witnesses, and sent by express to one of his majesty's secretaries of state; and as for yourself, I will apply to the military at Canterbury, for a guard to conduct you to London."

This was a very unwelcome declaration to our adventurer, who was on the point of harranguing the justice and spectators in their own language, when he was relieved from the necessity of taking that step, by the interposition of a young nobleman just arrived at the inn, who being informed of this strange examination, entered the court, and at first sight of the prisoner, assured the justice he was imposed upon; for, that he himself had often seen the young Pretender in Paris, and that there was no kind of resemblance between that adventurer and the person now before him. The accuser was not a little mortified at his lordship's affirmation, which met with all due regard from the bench; though the magistrate took notice that granting the prisoner was not the young chevalier himself, it was highly probable, he was an emissary of that house, as he could give no satisfactory account of himself, and was possessed of things of such value as no honest man would expose to the accidents of the road.

Fathom having thus found an interpreter, who signified to him in the French tongue, the doubts of the justice, told his lordship that he was a gentleman of a noble house in Germany, who for certain reasons, had come abroad incognito, with a view to see the world; and that although the letters they had seised, would prove the truth of that assertion, he should be loth to expose his private concerns to the knowledge of strangers, if he could possibly be released without that mortification. The young nobleman explained his desire to the court; but, his own curiosity being interested, observed at the same time, that the justice could not be said to have discharged the duty of his station, until he should have examined every circumstance relating to the prisoner: upon which remonstrance, he was requested by the bench to peruse the papers, and accord-

ingly communicated the substance of one letter, to this effect.

"My dear son,

"Though I am far from approving the rash step you have taken in withdrawing yourself from your father's house, in order to avoid an engagement, which would have been equally honourable and advantageous to your family, I cannot so far suppress my affection, as to bear the thought of your undergoing those hardships, which for your disobedience, you deserve to suffer. I have therefore, without the knowledge of your father, sent the bearer to attend you in your peregrinations; his fidelity you know hath been tried in a long course of service, and I have entrusted to his care for your use, a purse of two hundred ducats, and a box of jewels to the value of twice that sum, which though not sufficient to support an equipage suitable to your birth, will, at least for some time, preserve you from the importunities of want. When you are dutiful enough to explain your designs and situation, you may expect further indulgence from your too tender and disconsolate mother,

"THE COUNTESS OF FATHOM."

This letter, which, as well as the others, our hero had forged for the purpose, effectually answered his intent, in throwing dust in the eyes and understanding of the spectators, who now regarded the prisoner with looks of respectful remorse, as a man of quality who had been falsly accused: his lordship to make a parade of his own politeness and importance, assured the bench, he was no stranger to the family of the Fathoms, and with a compliment, gave Ferdinand to understand he had formerly seen him

at Versailles. There being no longer room for suspicion, the justice ordered our adventurer to be set at liberty, and even invited him to be seated, with an apology for the rude manner in which he had been treated, owing to the misinformation of the accuser, who was threatned with the stocks for his malice and presumption.

But, this was not the only triumph our hero obtained over the wine-merchant. Maurice was no sooner unfettered, than advancing into the middle of the room; "My lord, said he, addressing himself in French, to his master's deliverer, since you have been so generous as to protect a noble stranger from the danger of such a false accusation, I hope you will still lay an additional obligation upon the count, by retorting the vengeance of the law upon his perfidious accuser, whom I know to be a trader in those articles of merchandize, which are prohibited by the ordonnances of this nation. I have seen him lately at Bullogne, and am perfectly well acquainted with some persons who have supplied him with French lace and embroidery; and as a proof of what I alledge, I desire you will order him and this barber, who is his understrapper, to be examined on the spot."

This charge, which was immediately explained to the bench, yielded extraordinary satisfaction to the spectators, one of whom, being an officer of the customs, forthwith began to exercise his function upon the unlucky perruquier, who being stripped of his upper garments, and even of his shirt, appeared like the mummy of an Ægyptian king, most curiously rolled up in bandages of rich, figured gold shalloon, that covered the skirts of four embroidered waistcoats. The merchant seeing his expectation so unhappily reversed, made an effort to retire with a most rueful aspect; but was prevented by the officer, who de-

manded the interposition of the civil power, that he might undergo the same examination, to which the other had been subjected. He was accordingly rifled without loss of time, and the enquiry proved well worth the care of him who made it; for, a considerable booty of the same sort of merchandize was found in his boots, breeches, hat, and between the buckram and lining of his surtout. Yet not contented with this prize, the experienced spoiler proceeded to search his baggage, and perceiving a false bottom in his portmanteau, detected beneath it a valuable accession to the plunder he had already obtained.

CHAP. XXX.

The singular manner of Fathom's attack and triumph over the virtue of the fair Elenor.

PROPER cognizance being thus taken of these contraband effects, and the informer furnished with a certificate by which he was intitled to a share of the seizure, the coachman summoned his passengers to the carriage; the purse and jewels were restored to Count Fathom, who thanked the justice, and his lordship in particular, for the candour and hospitality with which he had been treated, and resumed his place in the vehicle, amidst the congratulations of all his fellow travellers, except the two forlorn smugglers, who instead of reimbarking in the coach, thought proper to remain at the inn, with a view to mitigate, if possible, the severity of their misfortune.

Among those who felicitated Fathom upon the issue of this adventure, the young maiden seemed to express the most sensible pleasure at that event. The artful language of his eyes had raised in her breast certain fluttering emotions, before she knew the value of her conquest; but now

that his rank and condition were discovered, these transports were increased by the ideas of vanity and ambition which are mingled with the first seeds of every female constitution. The belief of having captivated the heart of a man who could raise her to the rank and dignity of a countess, produced such agreeable sensations in her fancy, that her eyes shone with unusual lustre, and a continual smile played in dimples, on her rosy cheeks; so that her attractions, though not powerful enough to engage the affection, were yet sufficient to inflame the desire of our adventurer, who very honestly marked her chastity for prey to his voluptuous passion. Had she been well seasoned with knowledge and experience, and compleatly armed with caution against the artifice and villainy of man, her virtue might not have been able to withstand the engines of such an assailant, considering the dangerous opportunities to which she was necessarily exposed: how easy then must his victory have been over an innocent, unsuspecting country damsel, flushed with the warmth of youth, and an utter stranger to the ways of life.

While Obadiah, therefore, and his plump companion were engaged in conversation, on the strange incidents which had passed, Fathom acted a very expressive pantomime with this fair buxom nymph, who comprehended his meaning with surprizing facility, and was at so little pains to conceal the pleasure she took in this kind of intercourse, that several warm squeezes were interchanged between her and her lover, before they arrived at Rochester, where they proposed to dine. It was during this period, he learned from the answers she made to the inquisitive quaker, that her sole dependance was upon a relation, to whom she had a letter, and that she was a perfect

stranger in the great city; circumstances on which he soon formed the project of her ruin.

Upon their arrival at the Black Bull, he for the first time found himself alone with his Amanda, whose name was Elenor, their fellow-travellers being elsewhere employed about their own concerns; and unwilling to lose the precious opportunity, he began to act the part of a very importunate lover, which he conceived to be a proper sequel to the prelude, which had been performed in the coach. The freedoms that she, out of pure simplicity and good humour, permitted him to take with her hand, and even her rosy lips, encouraged him to practise other familiarities upon her fair bosom, which scandalized her virtue so much, that in spite of the passion she had begun to indulge in his behalf, she rejected his advances with all the marks of anger and disdain; and he found it necessary to appease the storm he had raised, by the most respectful and submissive demeanour; resolving to change his operations, and carry on his attacks, so as to make her yield at discretion, without alarming her religion or pride. Accordingly, when the bill was called after dinner, he took particular notice of her behaviour, and perceiving her pull out a large leathern purse that contained her money, reconnoitred the pocket in which it was deposited, and while they sat close to each other in the carriage, conveyed it with admirable dexterity into an hole in the cushion. Whether the corpulent couple, who sat opposite to these lovers, had entered into an amorous engagement at the inn, or were severally induced by other motives, is uncertain; but, sure it is, both left the coach on that part of the road which lies nearest to Gravesend, and bad adieu to the other pair, on pretence of having urgent business at that place.

Ferdinand, not a little pleased at their departure, renewed his most pathetic expressions of love, and sung several French songs on that tender subject, which seemed to thrill to the soul of his beauteous Helen. While the driver halted at Dartford to water his horses, she was smit with the appearance of some cheesecakes, which were presented by the landlady of the house, and having bargained for two or three, put her hand in her pocket, in order to pay for her purchase; but what was her astonishment, when after having rummaged her equipage, she understood her whole fortune was lost! This mishap was by a loud shriek announced to our hero, who affected infinite amazement and concern; and no sooner learned the cause of her affliction, than he presented her with his own purse, from which he, in emphatic dumb shew, begged she would indemnify herself for the damage she had sustained. Although this kind proffer was some alleviation of her misfortune, she did not fail to pour forth a most piteous lamentation, importing that she had not only lost all her money, amounting to five pounds, but also her letter of recommendation upon which she had altogether relied for present employment.

The vehicle was minutely searched from top to bottom, by herself and our adventurer, assisted by Maurice, and the coachman, who finding their inquiry ineffectual, did not scruple to declare his suspicion of the two fat turtles who had deserted the coach in such an abrupt manner. In a word, he rendered this conjecture so plausible, by wresting the circumstances of their behaviour and retreat, that poor Elenor implicitly believed they were the thieves by whom she had suffered; and was prevailed upon to accept the proffered assistance of the generous count, who seeing her very much disordered by this mischance, insisted upon

her drinking a large glass of Canary to quiet the perturbation of her spirits. This is a season, which of all others, is most propitious to the attempts of an artful lover; and justifies the metaphorical maxim of fishing in troubled waters. There is an affinity and short transition betwixt all the violent passions that agitate the human mind: they are all false perspectives, which though they magnify, yet perplex and render indistinct every object which they represent: and flattery is never so successfully administered, as to those who know they stand in need of friendship, assent, and approbation.

The cordial she swallowed, far from calming, increased the disturbance of her thoughts, and produced an intoxication; during which, she talked in an incoherent strain, laughed and wept by turns, and acted other extravagancies, which are known to be symptoms of the hysterical affection. Fathom, though an utter stranger to the sentiments of honour, pity and remorse, would not perpetrate his vitious purpose, though favoured by the delirium his villainy had entailed upon this unfortunate young maiden; because his appetite demanded a more perfect sacrifice, than that which she could yield in her present deplorable situation, when her will must have been altogether unconcerned in his success. Determined therefore, to make a conquest of her virtue, before he would take possession of her person, he mimicked that compassion and benevolence, which his heart had never felt, and when the coach arrived at London, not only discharged what she owed for her place, but likewise, procured for her an apartment in the house, to which he himself had been directed for lodgings, and even hired a nurse to attend her, during a severe fever, which was the consequence of her disappointment and despondence. Indeed she was supplied

with all necessaries by the generosity of this noble count, who for the interest of his passion, and the honour of his name, was resolved to extend his charity to the last farthing of her own money, which he had been wise enough to secure for this purpose.

Her youth soon got the better of her distemper, and when she understood her obligations to the count, who did not fail to attend her in person with great tenderness, her heart, which had been before prepossessed in his favour, now glowed with all the warmth of gratitude, esteem and affection. She knew herself in a strange place, destitute of all resource but in his generosity: she loved his person, she was dazzled by his rank; and he knew so well how to improve the opportunities and advantages he derived from her unhappy situation, that he gradually proceeded in sapping from one degree of intimacy to another, until all the bulwarks of her chastity were undermined, and she submitted to his desire; not with the reluctance of a vanquished people, but with all the transports of a joyful city, that opens its gates to receive a darling prince, returned from conquest: for, by this time, he had artfully concentred and kindled up, all the inflammable ingredients of her constitution; and she now looked back upon the virtuous principles of her education, as upon a disagreeable and tedious dream, from which she had waked to the fruition of never-fading joy.

CHAP. XXXI.

He by accident encounters his old friend, with whom he holds a conference, and renews a treaty.

OUR Hero having thus provided himself with a proper subject for his hours of dalliance, thought it was now high time to study the ground which he had

pitched upon for the scene of his exploits, and with that view made several excursions to different parts of the town, where there was ought of entertainment or instruction to be found: yet he always, on these occasions, appeared in an obscure ordinary dress, in order to avoid singularity, and never went twice to the same coffee-house, that his person might not be afterwards known, in case he should shine forth to the public, in a superior sphere. On his return from one of these expeditions, while he was passing through Ludgate, his eyes were suddenly encountered, by the apparition of his old friend the Tyroleze, who perceiving himself fairly caught in the toil, made a virtue of necessity, and running up to our adventurer with an aspect of eagerness and joy, clasped him in his arms, as some dear friend, whom he had casually found after a most tedious and disagreeable separation.

Fathom, whose genius never failed him in such emergencies, far from receiving these advances with the threats and reproaches which the other had deserved at his hands, returned the salute with equal warmth, and was really over-joyed at meeting with a person, who might one way or other make amends for the perfidy of his former conduct. The Tyroleze, whose name was Ratchkali, pleased with his reception, proposed they should adjourn to the next tavern, in which they had no sooner taken possession of an apartment, than he addressed himself to his old companion in these words.

"Mr. Fathom, by your frank and obliging manner of treating a man who hath done you wrong, I am more and more confirmed in my opinion of your sagacity, which I have often considered with admiration: I will not therefore, attempt to make an apology for my conduct at our last parting; but only assure you that this meeting may

turn out to our mutual advantage, if we now re-enter into an unreserved union, the ties of which we will soon find it our interest and inclination to preserve. For my own part, as my judgment is ripened by experience, so are my sentiments changed since our last association. I have seen many a rich harvest lost, for want of a fellow-labourer in the vineyard; and I have more than once fallen a sacrifice to a combination, which I could have resisted with the help of one able auxiliary. Indeed I might prove what I alledge by mathematical demonstration; and I believe no body will pretend to deny, that two heads are better than one, in all cases that require discernment and deliberation."

Ferdinand could not help owning the sanity of his observations, and forthwith acquiesced in his proposal of the new alliance; desiring to know the character in which he acted in the English stage, and the scheme he would offer for their mutual emolument: at the same time he resolved within himself, to keep such a strict eye over his future actions, as would frustrate any design, he might hereafter harbour, of repeating the prank he had so successfully played upon him, in their journey from the banks of the Rhine.

"Having quitted you at Bar le duc, resumed the Tyroleze, I travelled without ceasing, until I arrived at Franckfort upon the Maine, where I assumed the character of a French chevalier, and struck some masterly strokes, which you yourself would not have deemed unworthy of your invention; and my success was the more agreeable, as my operations were chiefly carried on against the enemies of our religion: but my prosperity was not of long duration. Seeing they could not foil me at my own weapons, they formed a damned conspiracy, by which I not only lost all

the fruits of my industry, but likewise ran the most imminent hazard of my life. I had ordered some of those jewels which I had borrowed of my good friend Fathom, to be new set in a fashionable taste, and soon after had an opportunity to sell one of these at a great advantage, to one of the fraternity, who offered an extraordinary price for the stone, on purpose to effect my ruin. In less than four and twenty hours after this bargain, I was arrested by the officers of justice, upon the oath of the purchaser, who undertook to prove me guilty of a fraud, in selling a Saxon pebble for a real diamond; and this accusation was actually true; for the change had been artfully put upon me, by the jeweller, who was himself engaged in the conspiracy.

"Had my conscience been clear of any other impeachment, perhaps, I should have rested my cause upon the equity and protection of the law; but, I foresaw that the trial would introduce an inquiry, to which I was not at all ambitious of submitting, and therefore was fain to compromise the affair, at the price of almost my whole fortune. Yet, this accommodation was not made so secretly, but that my character was blasted, and my credit overthrown; so that I was fain to relinquish my occasional equipage, and hire myself as journeyman to a lapidary, an employment which I had exercised in my youth. In this obscure station, I laboured with great assiduity, until I made myself perfect in the knowledge of stones, as well as in the different methods of setting them off to the best advantage; and having, by dint of industry and address, got possession of a small parcel, set out for this kingdom, in which I happily arrived about four months ago; and surely England is the paradise of artists of our profession.

"One would imagine, that nature had created the in-

habitants, for the support and enjoyment of adventurers like you and me. Not that these islanders open the arms of hospitality to all foreigners without distinction: on the contrary, they inherit from their fathers, an unreasonable prejudice against all nations under the sun; and when an Englishman happens to quarrel with a stranger, the first term of reproach he uses, is the name of his antagonist's country, characterized by some opprobrious epithet; such as a chattering Frenchman, an Italian ape, a German hog, and a beastly Dutchman; nay, their national prepossession is maintained even against those people with whom they are united, under the same laws and government; for, nothing is more common than to hear them exclaim against their fellow-subjects, in the expressions of a beggarly Scot, and an impudent Irish bog-trotter. Yet, this very prejudice will never fail to turn to the account of every stranger possessed of ordinary talents; for he will always find opportunities of conversing with them in Coffee-houses, and places of public resort, in spite of their professed reserve, which, by the bye, is so extraordinary, that I know some people who have lived twenty years in the same house, without exchanging one word with their next door neighbours; yet, provided he can talk sensibly, and preserve the deportment of a sober gentleman, in those occasional conversations, his behaviour will be the more remarkably pleasing, as it will agreeably disappoint the expectation of the person, who had entertained notions to his prejudice. When a foreigner has once crossed this bar, which perpetually occurs, he sails without further difficulty into the harbour of an Englishman's good will; for the pique is neither personal nor rancorous, but rather contemptuous and national; so that while he despises a people in the lump, an individual

of that very community, may be one of his chief favourites.

"The English are in general upright and honest, therefore unsuspecting and credulous: they are too much engrossed with their own business, to pry into the conduct of their neighbours, and too indifferent, in point of disposition, to interest themselves, in what they conceive to be foreign to their own concerns. They are wealthy and mercantile, of consequence liberal and adventurous, and so well disposed to take a man's own word for his importance, that they suffer themselves to be preyed upon by such a bungling set of impostors, as would starve for lack of address, in any other country under the sun. This being a true sketch of the British character, so far as I have been able to observe and learn, you will easily comprehend the profits that may be extracted from it, by virtue of those arts by which you so eminently excel; *the great, the unbounded prospect lies before me!* Indeed, I look upon this opulent kingdom, as a wide and fertile common, on which we adventurers may range for prey, without let or molestation: for so jealous are the natives of their liberty, that they will not bear the restraint of necessary *Police*, and an able artist may enrich himself with their spoils, without running any risque of attracting the notice of the magistrate, or incuring the least penalty of the law.

"In a word, this metropolis is a vast masquerade, in which a man of stratagem may wear a thousand different disguises, without danger of detection. There is a variety of shapes, in which we knights of the industry, make our appearance in London. One glides into a nobleman's house in the capacity of a valet de chambre, and in a few months leads the whole family by the nose. Another exhibits himself to the public, as an empiric or operator for the teeth;

and by dint of assurance and affidavits, bearing testimony to wonderful cures that never were performed, whirls himself into his chariot, and lays the town under contribution: a third professes the composition of musick, as well as the performance, and by means of a few *Capriciosos* on the violin, properly introduced, wriggles himfelf into the management of private and public concerts: and a fourth breaks forth at once in all the splendor of a gay equipage, under the title and denomination of a foreign count. Not to mention those inferior projectors, who assume the characters of dancers, fencing-masters, and French ushers, or by renouncing their religion, seek to obtain a provision for life.

Either of these parts will turn to the account of an able actor; and as you are equally qualified for all, you may choose that which is most suitable to your own inclination: though in my opinion, you was designed by nature, to shine in the great world, which, after all, is the most ample field, for men of genius; because the game is deeper, and people of fashion being, for the most part, more ignorant, indolent, vain and capricious than their inferiors, are of consequence more easily deceived; besides their morals sit generally so loose about them, that when a gentleman of our fraternity is discovered in the exercise of his profession, their contempt of his skill is the only disgrace he incurs."

Our hero was so well pleased with this picture, that he longed to peruse the original, and before these two friends parted, they settled all the operations of the campaign. Ratchkali, that same evening, hired magnificent lodgings for Count Fathom, in the court end of the town, and furnished his wardrobe and liveries from the spoils of Monmouth-street; he likewise enlisted another footman and valet de chambre into his service, and sent to the apart-

ments divers large trunks, supposed to be filled with the baggage of this foreign nobleman, though in reality, they contained little else than common lumber.

Next day, our adventurer took possession of his new habitation, after having left to his friend and associate the task of dismissing the unfortunate Elenor, who was so shocked at the unexpected message, that she fainted away; and when she recovered the use of her senses, so well as to reflect upon her forlorn condition, she was seized with the most violent transports of grief and dismay, by which her brain was disordered to such a degree, that she grew furious and distracted, and was by the advice and assistance of the Tyroleze, conveyed into the hospital of Bethlem; where we shall leave her for the present, happily bereft of her reason.

CHAP. XXXII.

He appears in the great world with universal applause and admiration.

MEAN while, Fathom and his engine were busied in compleating his equipage, so that in a few days, he had procured a very gay chariot, adorned with painting, gilding, and a coat of arms according to his own fancy and direction: the first use he made of this vehicle, was that of visiting the young nobleman from whom he had received such important civilities on the road, in consequence of an invitation at parting, by which he learned his title and the place of his abode in London.

His lordship was not only pleased, but proud to see such a stranger at his gate, and entertained him with excess of complaisance and hospitality; insomuch, that by his means

our hero soon became acquainted with the whole circle of polite company, by whom he was caressed for his insinuating manners and agreeable conversation. He had thought proper to tell the nobleman at their first interview in town, that his reasons for concealing his knowledge of the English tongue were now removed, and that he would no longer deny himself the pleasure of speaking a language which had been always musick to his ear: he had also thanked his lordship for his generous interposition at the inn, which was an instance of that generosity and true politeness, which are engrossed by the English people, who leave nought to other nations but the meer shadow of these virtues.

A testimony like this, from the mouth of such a noble stranger, won the heart of the peer, who professed a friendship for him on the spot, and undertook to see justice done to his lacquey, who in a short time was gratified with a share of the seisure which had been made upon his information, amounting to fifty or sixty pounds.

Ferdinand put not forth the whole strength of his accomplishments at once, but contrived to spring a new mine of qualification every day, to the surprize and admiration of all his acquaintance. He was gifted with a sort of elocution, much more specious than solid, and spoke on every subject that occurred in conversation, with that familiarity and ease, which, one would think, could only be acquired by long study and application. This plausibility and confidence, are faculties really inherited from nature, and effectually serve the possessor, in lieu of that learning, which is not to be obtained without infinite toil and perseverance: the most superficial tincture of the arts and sciences in such a juggler, is sufficient to dazzle the understanding of half mankind; and if managed with circumspection, will enable

him even to spend his life among the literati, without once forfeiting the character of a connoisseur.

Our hero was perfectly master of this legerdemain, which he carried to such a pitch of assurance, as to declare in the midst of a mathematical assembly, that he intended to gratify the publick with a full confutation of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy, to the nature of which he was as much a stranger as the most savage Hottentot in Afric. His pretensions to profound and universal knowledge, were supported not only by this kind of presumption, but also by the facility with which he spoke so many different languages, and the shrewd remarks he had made in the course of his travels and observation.

Among politicians, he settled the balance of power upon a certain footing, by dint of ingenious schemes, which he had contrived for the welfare of Europe. With officers, he reformed the art of war, with improvements which had occurred to his reflection, while he was engaged in a military life. He sometimes held forth upon painting, like a member of the *Dillettanti* club: the theory of musick was a theme upon which he seemed to expatiate with particular pleasure: in the provinces of love and gallantry, he was a perfect Oroondates: he possessed a most agreeable manner of telling entertaining stories, of which he had a large collection: he sung with great melody and taste, and played upon the violin with surprizing execution. To these qualifications, let us add his affability and pliant disposition, and then the reader will not wonder that he was looked upon as the pattern of human perfection, and his acquaintance courted accordingly.

While he thus captivated the favour and affection of the English nobility, he did not neglect to take other measures in behalf of the partnership to which he had subscribed.

This adventure with the two squires at Paris, had weakened his appetite for play, which was not at all restored by the observations he had made in London, where the art of gaming is reduced into a regular system, and its professors so laudably devoted to the discharge of their functions, as to observe the most temperate regimen, lest their invention should be impaired by the fatigue of watching or exercise, and their ideas disturbed by the fumes of indigestion. No Indian Brachman could live more abstemious than two of the pack, who hunted in couple, and kennelled in the upper apartments of the hotel in which our adventurer lived: they abstained from animal food with the abhorrence of Pythagoreans, their drink was the pure, simple element, they were vomited once a week, took physic or a glyster every third day, spent the forenoon in algebraical calculations, and slept from four o'clock till midnight, that they might then take the field with that cool serenity which is the effect of refreshment and repose.

These were terms upon which our hero would not risque his fortune; he was too much addicted to pleasure to forego every other enjoyment but that of amassing; and did not so much depend upon his dexterity in play, as upon his talent of insinuation, which by this time, had succeeded so far beyond his expectation, that he began to indulge the hope of enslaving the heart of some rich heiress, whose fortune would at once raise him above all dependance. Indeed no man ever set out with a fairer prospect on such an expedition; for, he had found means to render himself so agreeable to the fair sex, that like the boxes of the playhouse, during the representation of a new performance, his company was often bespoke for a series of weeks; and no lady, whether widow, wife or maiden, ever mentioned his name, without some epithet of esteem or affection;

such as *the dear Count! the charming Man! the Nonpareil!* or *the Angel!*

While he thus shone in the zenith of admiration, it is not to be doubted, that he could have melted some wealthy dowager or opulent ward: but being an enemy to all precipitate engagements, he resolved to act with great care and deliberation in an affair of such importance, especially as he did not find himself hurried by the importunities of want: for, since his arrival in England, he had rather increased than exhausted his finances, by methods equally certain and secure. In a word, he with the assistance of Ratchkali carried on a traffick, which yielded great profits, without subjecting the trader to the least loss or inconvenience. Fathom, for example, wore upon his finger a large brilliant, which he played to such advantage one night, at a certain nobleman's house, where he was prevailed upon to entertain the company with a solo on the violin, that every body present took notice of its uncommon lustre, and it was handed about for the perusal of every individual. The water and the workmanship were universally admired; and one among the rest, having expressed a desire of knowing the value of such a jewel, the count seized that opportunity of entertaining them with a learned disquisition into the nature of stones; this introduced the history of the diamond in question, which he said had been purchased of an Indian trader of Fort St. George, at an under price; so that the present proprietor could afford to sell it at a very reasonable rate; and concluded with telling the company, that for his own part, he had been importuned to wear it, by the jeweller, who imagined it would have a better chance for attracting a purchaser on his finger, than while it remained in his own custody.

This declaration was no sooner made, than a certain

lady of quality, bespoke the refuse of the jewel, and desired Ferdinand to send the owner next day to her house, where he accordingly waited upon her ladyship with the ring, for which he received one hundred and fifty guineas, two thirds of the sum being clear gain, and equally divided betwixt the associates. Nor was this bargain such as reflected dishonour upon the lady's taste, or could be productive of ill consequences to the merchant: for the method of estimating diamonds is altogether arbitrary; and Ratchkali, who was an exquisite lapidary, had set it in such a manner as would have imposed upon any ordinary jeweller. By these means of introduction, the Tyroleze soon monopolized the custom of a great many noble families, upon which he levied large contributions, without incurring the least suspicion of deceit: he every day out of pure esteem and gratitude for the honour of their commands, entertained them with the sight of some new trinket, which he was never permitted to carry home, unsold; and from the profits of each job, a tax was raised for the benefit of our adventurer.

Yet his indultos were not confined to the article of jewels, which constituted only one part of his revenue: by the industry of his understrapper, he procured a number of old crazy fiddles, which were thrown aside as lumber; upon which he counterfeited the Cremona mark, and otherwise cook'd them up with great dexterity; so that when he had occasion to regale the lovers of musick, he would send for one of these vamped instruments, and extract from it such tones as quite ravished the hearers; among whom there was always some conceited pretender, who spoke in raptures of the violin, and gave our hero an opportunity of launching out in its praise, and declaring it was the best Cremona he had ever touched. This en-

comium never failed to inflame the desires of the audience, to some one of whom, he was generous enough to part with it at prime cost, that is, for twenty or thirty guineas clear profit; for he was often able to oblige his friends in this manner, because, being an eminent connoisseur, his countenance was solicited by all the musicians, who wanted to dispose of such moveables.

Nor did he neglect the other resources of a skilful virtuoso. Every auction afforded some picture, in which, though it had been over-looked by the ignorance of the times, he recognized the stile of a great master, and made a merit of recommending it to some noble friend. This commerce he likewise extended to medals, bronzes, busts, intaglios and old china, and kept divers artificers continually employed in making antiques for the English nobility. Thus he went on with such rapidity of success in all his endeavours, that he himself was astonished at the infatuation he had produced. Nothing was so wretched among the productions of art, that he could not impose upon the world as a capital performance, and so fascinated were the eyes of his admirers, he could easily have persuaded them that a barber's bason was an Etrurian Patera, and the cover of a copper pot, no other than the shield of Ancus Martius. In short, it was become so fashionable to consult the count in every thing relating to taste and politeness, that not a plan was drawn, not even an house furnished without his advise and approbation; nay, to such a degree did his reputation in these matters excel, that a particular pattern of paper-hangings was known by the name of Fathom; and his hall was every morning crouded with upholsterers and other tradesmen, who came by order of their employers, to learn his choice, and take his directions.

The character and influence he thus acquired he took care to maintain with the utmost assiduity and circumspection: he never failed to appear the chief personage at all public diversions, and private assemblies, not only in conversation and dress, but also in the article of dancing, in which he outstripped all his fellows, as far as in every other genteel accomplishment.

CHAP. XXXIII.

He attracts the envy and ill offices of the minor knights of his own order, over whom he obtains a compleat victory.

SUCH a preheminence could not be enjoyed without exciting the malevolence of envy and detraction, in the propagation of which, none were so industrious as the brethren of his own order, who had, like him, made a descent upon this island, and could not without repining, see the whole harvest in the hands of one man, who with equal art and discretion avoided all intercourse with their society. In vain they strove to discover his pedigree, and detect the particular circumstances of his life and conversation; all their inquiries were bafled by the obscurity of his origin, and that solitary scheme which he had adopted in the beginning of his career. The whole fruit of their investigation, amounted to no more than a certainty that there was no family of any consideration in Europe, known by the denomination of Fathom; and this discovery they did not fail to divulge for the benefit of our adventurer, who had by this time, taken such firm root in the favour of the great, as to set all those little arts at defiance; and when the report reached his ear, actually made his friends merry with the conjectures which had been circulated at his expence.

His adversaries finding themselves disappointed in this effort, held a consultation to devise other measures against him, and came to a resolution of ending him by the sword, or rather of expelling him from the kingdom, by the fear of death, which they hoped he had not courage enough to resist, because his deportment had been always remarkably mild and pacific. It was upon this supposition, that they left to the determination of the dice, the choice of the person who should execute their plan; and the lot falling upon a Swiss, who from the station of a foot-soldier in the Dutch service, out of which he had been drummed for theft, had erected himself into the rank of a self-created chevalier; this hero fortified himself with a double dose of brandy, and betook himself to a certain noted coffee-house, with an intent to affront count Fathom in publick.

He was lucky enough to find our adventurer sitting at a table in conversation with some persons of the first rank; upon which he seated himself in the next box, and after having intruded himself into their discourse, which happened to turn upon the politicks of some German courts; "Count, said he to Ferdinand, in a very abrupt and disagreeable manner of address, I was last night in company with some gentlemen, among whom a dispute happened about the place of your nativity; pray, what country are you of?" "Sir, answered the other, with great politeness, I at present have the honour to be of England." "Oho! replied the chevalier, I ask your pardon, that is to say, you are incog.—Some people may find it convenient to keep themselves in that situation." "True, said the count, but some people are too well known to enjoy that privilege." The Swiss being a little disconcerted at this repartee, which extracted a smile from the au-

dience; after some pause, observed, that persons of a certain class, had good reason to drop the remembrance of what they have been; but a good citizen will not forget his country or former condition. "And a bad citizen, saith Fathom, cannot if he would, provided he has met with his deserts; a sharper may as well forget the shape of a die, or a discarded soldier the sound of a drum."

As the chevalier's character and story were not unknown, this application raised a universal laugh at his expence, which provoked him to such a degree, that starting up, he swore Fathom could not have mentioned any object in nature that he himself resembled so much as a drum, which was exactly typified by his emptiness and sound, with this difference however, that a drum was never noisy till beaten, whereas the count would never be quiet until he should have undergone the same discipline. So saying, he laid his hand upon his sword with a menacing look, and walked out as if in expectation of being followed by our adventurer, who suffered himself to be detained by the company, and very calmly took notice, that his antagonist would not be ill pleased at their interposition. Perhaps he would not have comported himself with such ease and deliberation, had not he made such remarks upon the disposition of the chevalier, as convinced him of his own safety. He had perceived a perplexity and perturbation in the countenance of the Swiss, when he first entered the coffee-room; his blunt and precipitate way of accosting him, seemed to denote confusion and compulsion; and in the midst of his ferocity, this accurate observer discerned the trepidation of fear. By the help of these signs, his sagacity soon comprehended the nature of his schemes, and prepared accordingly for a formal defiance.

His conjecture was verified next morning by a visit

from the chevalier, who taking it for granted that Fathom would not face an adversary in the field, because he had not followed him from the coffee-house, went to his lodgings with great confidence, and demanded to see the count upon an affair that would admit of no delay. Maurice, according to his instructions, told him that his master was gone out, but desired he would have the goodness to repose himself in a parlour, till the count's return, which he expected every moment. Ferdinand, who had taken post in a proper place for observation, seeing his antagonist fairly admitted, took the same road, and appearing before him, wrapped up in a long Spanish cloak, desired to know what had procured him the honour of such an early visit. The Swiss raising his voice to conceal his agitation explained his errand, in demanding reparation, for the injury his honour had sustained the preceding day, in that odious allusion to a scandalous report which had been raised by the malice of his enemies; and insisted in a very imperious stile, upon his attending him forthwith to the nursery in Hyde-park. "Have a little patience, said our adventurer with great composure, and I will do myself the pleasure to wait upon you in a few moments."

With these words, he rung the bell, and calling for a bason of water, laid aside his cloak, and displayed himself in his shirt, with a sword in his right-hand, which was all over besmeared with recent blood, as if he had just come from the slaughter of a foe. This phænomenon made such an impression upon the astonished chevalier, already discomposed by the resolute behaviour of the count, that he became jaundiced with terror and dismay, and while his teeth chattered in his head, told our hero he had hoped from his known politeness, to have found him ready to acknowledge an injury which might have been the effect

of anger or misapprehension, in which case the affair might have been compromised to their mutual satisfaction, without proceeding to those extremities, which, among men of honour, are always accounted the last resource. To this representation, Ferdinand answered, that the affair had been of the chevalier's own seeking, inasmuch as he had intruded himself into his company, and treated him with the most insolent and unprovoked abuse, which plainly flowed from a premeditated design against his honour and reputation; he therefore, far from being disposed to own himself in the wrong, would not even accept of a public acknowledgment from him the aggressor, whom he looked upon as an infamous sharper, and was resolved to chastise accordingly.

Here the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a person who was brought to the door in a chair, and conducted into another apartment, from which a message was brought to the count, importing, that the stranger desired to speak with him, upon business of the last importance. Fathom having chid the servant for admitting people without his order, desired the Swiss to excuse him for a minute longer, and went into the next room; from whence the following dialogue was overheard by this challenger. "Count, said the stranger, you are not ignorant of my pretensions to the heart of that young lady, at whose house I met you yesterday; therefore you cannot be surprized when I declare myself displeased with your visits and behaviour to my mistress, and demand that you will instantly promise to drop the correspondence." "Else what follows?" answered Ferdinand, with a cool and temperate voice. "My resentment and immediate defiance; replied the other, for the only alternative I

propose, is to forego your design upon that lady, or to decide our pretensions by the sword."

Our hero having expressed a regard for this visitant, as the son of a gentleman whom he honoured, was at the pains to represent the unreasonableness of his demand, and the folly of his presumption; and earnestly exhorted him to put the issue of his cause upon a more safe and equitable footing. But this admonition, instead of appeasing the wrath, seemed to inflame the resentment of the opponent, who swore he would not leave him until he should have accomplished the purport of his errand. In vain our adventurer requested half an hour for the dispatch of some urgent business, in which he was engaged with a gentleman in the other parlour: this impetuous rival rejected all the terms he could propose, and even challenged him to decide the controversy upon the spot; an expedient to which the other having assented with reluctance, the door was secured, the swords unsheathed, and an hot engagement ensued, to the inexpressible pleasure of the Swiss, who did not doubt that he himself would be screened from all danger by the event of this rencontre: nevertheless, his hope was disappointed in the defeat of the stranger, who was quickly disarmed, in consequence of a wound through the sword arm; upon which occasion Fathom was heard to say, that in consideration of his youth and family, he had spared his life; but he would not act with the same tenderness towards any other antagonist. He then bound up the limb he had disabled, conducted the vanquished party to his chair, rejoined the chevalier with a serene countenance, and asking pardon for having detained him so long, proposed they should instantly set out in an hackney coach, for the place of appointment.

The stratagem thus conducted, had all the success the inventor could desire. The fear of the Swiss had risen almost to an extasy, before the count quitted the room; but after this sham battle which had been preconcerted betwixt our adventurer and his friend Ratchkali, the chevalier's terrors were unspeakable. He considered Fathom as a devil incarnate, and went into the coach as a malefactor bound for Tyburn. He would have gladly compounded for the loss of a leg or arm, and entertained some transient gleams of hope, that he should escape for half a dozen flesh-wounds, which he would have willingly received, as the price of his presumption; but, these hopes were banish'd by the remembrance of that dreadful declaration which he had heard the count make, after having overcome his last adversary; and he continued under the power of the most insupportable pannic, until the carriage halted at Hyde-park-corner, where he crawled forth in a most piteous and lamentable condition; so that when they reached the spot, he was scarce able to stand.

Here he made an effort to speak, and proposed an accommodation upon a new plan, by which he promised to leave his cause to the arbitrement of those gentlemen who were present at the rupture, and to ask pardon of the count, provided he should be found guilty of a trespass upon good manners: but this proposal would not satisfy the implacable Ferdinand, who perceiving the agony of the Swiss, resolved to make the most of the adventure, and giving him to understand he was not a man to be trifled with, desired him to draw without further preamble. Thus compelled, the unfortunate gamester pulled off his coat, and putting himself in a posture, to use the words of Nym, "winked and held out his cold iron."

Our adventurer, far from making a gentle use of the

advantages he possessed, fiercely attacked him, while he was incapable of making resistance, and aiming at a fleshy part, ran him through the arm and outside of the shoulder at the very first pass: the chevalier, already stupified with the horror of expectation, no sooner felt his adversary's point in his body, than he fell to the ground, and concluding he was no longer a man for this world, began to cross himself with great devotion, while Fathom walked home deliberately, and in his way sent a couple of chairmen to the assistance of the wounded knight.

This atchievement, which could not be concealed from the knowledge of the publick, not only furnished the character of Fathom with fresh wreaths of admiration and applause, but likewise effectually secured him from any future attempts of his enemies, to whom the Swiss, for his own sake, had communicated such terrible ideas of his valour, as over-awed the whole community.

CHAP. XXXIV.

He performs another exploit that conveys a true idea of his gratitude and honour.

IT was not long after this celebrated victory, that he was invited to spend part of the summer, at the house of a country gentleman, who lived about one hundred miles from London, possessed of a very opulent fortune, the greatest part of which was expended in acts of old English hospitality. He had met with our hero by accident, at the table of a certain great man, and was so struck with his manner and conversation, as to desire his acquaintance and cultivate his friendship; and he thought himself extremely happy in having prevailed upon him to pass a few weeks in his family.

Fathom, among his other observations, perceived that there was a domestic uneasiness, occasioned by a very beautiful young creature, about the age of fifteen, who resided in the house under the title of the gentleman's niece, though she was in reality, his natural daughter, born before his marriage. This circumstance was not unknown to his lady, by whose express approbation he had bestowed particular attention upon the education of the child, whom we shall distinguish by the name of Celinda: their liberality in this particular, had not been misapplied; for she not only gave marks of uncommon capacity, but as she grew up, became more and more amiable in her person, and was now returned from the boarding school, possessed of every accomplishment that could be acquired by one of her age and opportunities. These qualifications, which endeared her to every other person, excited the jealousy and displeasure of her supposed aunt, who could not bear to see her own children eclipsed by this illegitimate daughter, whom she therefore discountenanced upon all occasions, and exposed to such mortifications as would in all appearance drive her from her father's house. This persecuting spirit was very disagreeable to the husband, who loved Celinda with a truly paternal affection, and produced abundance of family disquiet; but being a man of a peaceable and yielding disposition, he could not long maintain the resolution he had taken in her favour, and therefore he ceased opposing the malevolence of his wife.

In this unfortunate predicament stood the fair bastard, at the arrival of our adventurer, who being allured by her charms, and apprized of her situation at the same time, took the generous resolution to undermine her innocence, that he might banquet his vicious appetite with the spoils of her beauty. Perhaps such a brutal design might not have

entered his imagination, if he had not observed in the disposition of this hapless maiden, certain peculiarities from which he derived the most confident presages of success. Besides a total want of experience, that left her open and unguarded against the attacks of the other sex, she discovered a remarkable spirit of credulity and superstitious fear, which had been cherished by the conversation of her school-fellows: she was particularly fond of musick, in which she had made some progress; but so delicate was the texture of her nerves, that one day, while Fathom entertained the company with a favourite air, she actually swooned with pleasure.

Such sensibility, our projector well knew, must be diffused through all the passions of her heart; he congratulated himself upon the sure ascendancy he had gained over her in this particular; and forthwith began to execute the plan he had erected for her destruction. That he might the more effectually deceive the vigilance of her father's wife, he threw such a dash of affectation in his complaisance towards Celinda, as could not escape the notice of that prying matron, though it was not palpable enough to disoblige the young lady herself, who could not so well distinguish between overstrained courtesy and real good breeding: this behaviour screened him from the suspicion of the family, who considered it as an effort of politeness, to cover his indifference and disgust for the daughter of his friend, who had by this time, given some reason to believe she looked upon him with the eyes of affection; so that the opportunities he enjoyed of conversing with her in private, were less liable to intrusion or inquiry. Indeed, from what I have already observed, touching the sentiments of her step-dame, that lady, far from taking measures for thwarting our hero's design, would have rejoiced

at the execution of it, and had she been informed of his intent, might have fallen upon some method to facilitate the enterprize; but, as he solely depended upon his own talents, he never dreamed of soliciting such an auxiliary.

Under cover of instructing and accomplishing her in the exercise of musick, he could not want occasions for promoting his aim; when after having soothed her sense of hearing, even to a degree of ravishment, so as to extort from her an exclamation, importing, that he was surely something supernatural! he never failed to whisper some insidious compliment or tale of love, exquisitely suited to the emotions of her soul. Thus was her heart insensibly subdued, though more than half his work was still undone; for, at all times, she disclosed such purity of sentiment, such inviolable attachment to religion and virtue, and seemed so averse to all sorts of inflammatory discourse, that he durst not presume upon the footing he had gained in her affection, to explain the baseness of his desire; therefore applied to another of her passions, that proved the bane of her virtue: this was her timidity, which at first being constitutional, was afterwards increased by the circumstances of her education, and now aggravated by the artful conversation of Fathom, which he checquered with dismal stories of omens, portents, prophecies and apparitions, delivered upon such unquestionable testimony, and with such marks of conviction, as captivated the belief of the devoted Celinda, and filled her imagination with unceasing terrors.

In vain she strove to dispel those frightful ideas, and avoid such topics of discourse for the future: the more she endeavoured to banish them, the more troublesome they became; and such was her infatuation, that as her terrors increased, her thirst after that sort of knowledge was aug-

mented. Many sleepless nights did she pass amidst those horrors of fancy, starting at every noise, and sweating with dreary apprehension, yet ashamed to own her fears, or sollicit the comfort of a bed-fellow, lest she should incur the ridicule and censure of her father's wife; and what rendered this disposition the more irksome, was the solitary situation of her chamber, that stood at the end of a long gallery scarce within hearing of any other inhabited part of the house.

All these circumstances had been duly weighed by our projector, who having prepared Celinda for his purpose, stole at midnight from his apartment, which was in another story, and approaching her door, there uttered a piteous groan; then softly retired to his bed, in full confidence of seeing next day the effect of this operation: nor did his arrow miss the mark: poor Celinda's countenance gave such indications of melancholy and dismay, that he could not omit asking the cause of her disquiet, and she, at his earnest request, was prevailed upon to communicate the dreadful salutation of the preceding night, which she considered as an omen of death to some person in the family, in all probability to herself, as the groan seemed to issue from one corner of her own apartment. Our adventurer argued against this supposition, as contradictory to the common observation of those supernatural warnings, which are not usually imparted to the person who is doomed to die, but to some faithful friend or trusty servant, particularly interested in the event. He therefore supposed that the groans foreboded the death of my lady, who seemed to be in a drooping state of health, and were by her genius conveyed to the organs of Celinda, who was the chief sufferer by her jealous and barbarous disposition; he likewise expressed an earnest desire to be an ear-witness of

such solemn communication, and alledging that it was highly improper for a young lady of her delicate feelings, to expose herself alone to such another dismal visitation, begged he might be allowed to watch all night in her chamber, in order to defend her from the shocking impressions of fear.

Though no person ever stood more in need of a companion or guard, and her heart throbbed with transports of dismay at the prospect of night, she rejected his proposal with due acknowledgment, and resolved to trust solely to the protection of Heaven: not that she thought her innocence or reputation could suffer by her compliance with his request; for hitherto, her heart was a stranger to those young desires which haunt the fancy and warm the breath of youth; so that being ignorant of her danger, she saw not the necessity of avoiding temptation: but she refused to admit a man into her bed-chamber, merely because it was a step altogether opposite to the forms and decorum of life. Nevertheless, far from being discouraged by this repulse, he knew her fears would multiply, and reduce that reluctance, which, in order to weaken, he had recourse to another piece of machinery, that operated powerfully in behalf of his design.

Some years ago, a twelve-stringed instrument was contrived by a very ingenious musician, by whom it was aptly intitled the harp of Æolus, because, being properly applied to a stream of air, it produces a wild, irregular variety of harmonious sounds, that seem to be the effect of inchantment, and wonderfully dispose the mind for the most romantic situations. Fathom, who was really a virtuoso in musick, had brought one of those new-fashioned guittarres into the country, and as the effect of it was still unknown in the family, he that night converted it to the

purposes of his amour, by fixing it in the casement of a window belonging to the gallery, exposed to the west-wind, which then blew in a gentle breeze. The strings no sooner felt the impression of the balmy zephyr, than they began to pour forth a stream of melody, more ravishingly delightful than the song of Philomel, the warbling brook, and all the concert of the wood. The soft and tender notes of peace and love were swelled up with the most delicate and insensible transition, into a loud hymn of triumph and exultation, joined by the deep-toned organ, and a full choir of voices, which gradually decayed upon the ear, until it died away, in distant sound, as if a flight of angels had raised the song in their ascent to Heaven. Yet the chords hardly ceased to vibrate after the expiration of this overture, which ushered in a composition in the same pathetic stile; and this again was succeeded by a third, almost without pause or intermission, as if the artist's hand had been indefatigable, and the theme never to be exhausted.

His heart must be quite callous, and his ear lost to all distinction, who could hear such harmony without emotion; how deeply then must it have affected the delicate Celinda, whose sensations, naturally acute, were whetted to a most painful keenness, by her apprehension; who could have no previous idea of such entertainment, and was credulous enough to believe the most improbable tale of superstition! She was overwhelmed with awful terror, and never doubting that the sounds were more than mortal, recommended herself to the care of providence in a succession of pious ejaculations.

Our adventurer having allowed some time for the effect of this contrivance, repaired to her chamber-door, and in a whisper conveyed thro' the key-hole, asked if she was

awake, begged pardon for such an unseasonable visit, and desired to know her opinion of the strange musick which he then heard. In spite of her notions of decency, she was glad of his intrusion, and being in no condition to observe punctilios, slipped on a wrapper, opened the door, and with a faultering voice, owned herself frightened almost to distraction. He pretended to console her with reflections, importing, that she was in the hands of a benevolent being, who would not impose upon his creatures any task which they could not bear; he insisted upon her returning to bed, and assured her he would not stir from her chamber till day. Thus comforted she betook herself again to rest, while he sat down in an elbow-chair at some distance from the bed-side, and in a soft voice began the conversation with her, on the subject of those visitations from above, which though undertaken on pretence of dissipating her fear and anxiety, was in reality calculated for the purpose of augmenting both.

"That sweet air, said he, seems designed for soothing the bodily anguish of some saint in his last moments. Hark! how it rises into a more sprightly and elevated strain, as if it were an inspiriting invitation to the realms of bliss! sure he is now absolved from all the misery of this life; that full and glorious concert of voices and celestial harps, betoken his reception among the heavenly choir, who now waft his soul to paradisian joys! this is altogether great, solemn and amazing! the clock strikes one, the symphony hath ceased!"

This was actually the case; for, he had ordered Maurice to remove the instrument at that hour, lest the sound of it should become too familiar, and excite the curiosity of some undaunted domestic, who might frustrate his scheme, by discovering the apparatus. As for poor Celin-

da, her fancy was, by his musick and discourse, worked up to the highest pitch of enthusiastic terrors; the whole bed shook with her trepidation, the awful silence that succeeded the supernatural musick, threw an additional damp upon her spirits, and the artful Fathom affecting to snore at the same time, she could no longer contain her horror, but called upon his name with a fearful accent, and having owned her present situation insupportable, intreated him to draw near her bed-side, that he might be within touch, on any emergency.

This was a welcome request to our adventurer, who asked pardon for his drowsiness, and taking his station on the side of her bed, exhorted her to compose herself; then locking her hand fast in his own, was again seized with such an inclination to sleep, that he gradually sunk down by her side, and seemed to enjoy his repose in that attitude. Mean while, his tender-hearted mistress, that he might not suffer in his health, by his humanity and complaisance, covered him with the counterpane as he slept, and suffered him to take his rest, without interruption: till he thought proper to start up suddenly, with an exclamation of, "Heaven watch over us!" and then asked with symptoms of astonishment, if she had heard nothing. Such an abrupt address, upon such an occasion, did not fail to amaze and affright the gentle Celinda, who unable to speak sprung towards her treacherous protector; and he catching her in his arms, bad her fear nothing; for he would, at the expence of his life, defend her from all danger.

Having thus, by tampering with her weakness, conquered the first and chief obstacles to his design, he with great art and perseverance improved the intercourse to such a degree of intimacy as could not but be productive

of all the consequences which he had foreseen. The groans and musick were occasionally repeated, so as to alarm the whole family, and inspire a thousand various conjectures: he failed not to continue his nocturnal visits and ghastly discourse, until his attendance became so necessary to this unhappy maiden, that she durst not stay in her own chamber without his company, nor even sleep except in contact with her betrayer.

Such a commerce between two such persons of a different sex, could not possibly be long carried on, without degenerating from the platonic system of sentimental love. In her paroxysms of dismay, he did not forget to breathe the soft inspirations of his passion, to which she listened with more pleasure, as they diverted the gloomy ideas of her fear; and by this time his extraordinary accomplishments had made a conquest of her heart. What therefore could be a more interesting transition, than that from the most uneasy to the most agreeable sensation of the human breast.

This being the case, the reader will not wonder that a consummate traitor, like Fathom, should triumph over the virtue of an artless innocent young creature, whose passions he had entirely under his command. The gradations towards vice are almost imperceptible, and an experienced seducer can strew them with such inticing and agreeable flowers, as will lead the young sinner on insensibly, even to the most profligate stages of guilt. All therefore that can be done by virtue, unassisted with experience, is to avoid every trial with such a formidable foe, by declining and discouraging the first advances towards a particular correspondence with perfidious man, howsoever agreeable it may seem to be: for, here, is no security but in conscious weakness.

Fathom, though possessed of the spoils of poor Celinda's honour, did not enjoy his success with tranquillity. Reflection and remorse often invaded her in the midst of their guilty pleasures, and embittered all those moments they had dedicated to mutual bliss. For the seeds of virtue are seldom destroyed at once: even amidst the rank productions of vice, they regerminate to a sort of imperfect vegetation, like some scattered hyacinths shooting up among the weeds of a ruined garden, that testify the former culture and amenity of the soil; she sighed at the sad remembrance of that virgin dignity which she had lost; she wept at the prospect of that disgrace, mortification and misery she should undergo, when abandoned by this transient lover, and severely reproached him for the arts he had used to shipwreck her innocence and peace.

Such expostulation are extremely unseasonable when addressed to a man well nigh sated with the effects of his conquest; they act like strong blasts of wind applied to embers almost extinguished, which instead of reviving the flame, scatter and destroy every remaining particle of fire. Our adventurer, in the midst of his peculiarities, had inconstancy in common with the rest of his sex. More than half cloyed with the possession of Celinda, he could not fail to be disgusted with her upbraidings; and had she not been the daughter of a gentleman whose friendship he did not think it his interest to forfeit, he would have dropt this correspondence without reluctance or hesitation: but, as he had measures to keep with a family of such consequence, he constrained his inclination so far, as to counterfeit those raptures he no longer felt, and found means to appease those intervening tumults of her grief.

Foreseeing, however, that it would not be always in his power to console her on these terms; he resolved, if

possible, to divide her affection, which now glowed upon him too intensely; and with that view, whenever she complained of the vapours or dejection, he prescribed, and even insisted upon her swallowing certain cordials of the most palatable composition, without which he never travelled; and these produced such agreeable reveries and flow of spirits, that she gradually became enamoured of intoxication; while he encouraged the pernicious passion, by expressing the most extravagant applause and admiration at the wild, irregular sallies it produced. Without having first made this diversion, he would have found it impracticable to leave the house in tranquillity; but when this bewitching philtre grew into an habit, her attachment to Ferdinand was insensibly dissolved; she began to bear his neglect with indifference, and sequestring herself from the rest of the family, used to sollicit this new ally, for consolation.

Having thus put the finishing stroke to the daughter's ruin, he took leave of the father with many acknowledgments and expressions of gratitude for his hospitality and friendship, and riding cross the country to Bristol, took up his habitation near the Hot-well, where he staid during the remaining part of the season. As for the miserable Celinda, she became more and more addicted to the vices in which she had been initiated by his superlative perfidy and craft; until she was quite abandoned by decency and caution: her father's heart was torn with anguish, while his wife rejoiced in her fall: at length, her ideas were quite debased by her infirmity; she grew every day more and more sensual and degenerate, and contracted an intimacy with one of the footmen, who was kind enough to take her to wife, in hope of obtaining a good settlement from his master; but being disappointed in his aim, he conducted her to London, where he made shift to insinuate himself into

another service, leaving to her, the use, and partly the advantage of her own person, which was still uncommonly attractive.

CHAP. XXXV.

He repairs to Bristol spring, where he reigns Paramount during the whole season.

WE shall therefore, leave her in this comfortable situation, and return to our adventurer, whose appearance at Bristol was considered as a happy omen by the proprietor of the Hot-well, and all the people who live by the resort of company to that celebrated spring. Nor were they deceived in their prognostic; Fathom, as usual, formed the nucleus or kernel of the beau monde; and the season soon became so crouded, that many people of fashion were obliged to quit the place for want of lodging. Ferdinand was the soul that animated the whole society. He not only invented parties of pleasure, but also, by his personal talents, rendered them more agreeable: In a word, he regulated their diversions, and the master of the ceremonies never would allow the ball to be begun, until the count was seated.

Having thus made himself the object of admiration and esteem, his advice was an oracle to which they had recourse in all doubtful cases of punctilio or dispute, or even of medicine; for among his other accomplishments, his discourse on that subject was so plausible, and well adapted to the understanding of his hearers, that any person who had not actually studied the medical art, would have believed he was inspired by the spirit of Æsculapius. What contributed to the agrandizement of his character in this branch of knowledge, was a victory he obtained over an old physician, who plied at the well, and had one day unfortunately begun to harrangue in the pump-room, upon the

nature of the Bristol water; in the course of this lecture, he undertook to account for the warmth of the fluid; and his ideas being perplexed with a great deal of reading, which he had not been able to digest, his disquisition was so indistinct, and his expression so obscure and unentertaining, that our hero seized the opportunity of displaying his own erudition, by venturing to contradict some circumstances of the doctor's hypothesis, and substituting a theory of his own, which, as he had invented it for the purpose, was equally amusing and chimerical.

He alledged, that fire was the sole vivifying principle that pervaded all nature; that as the heat of the sun concocted the juice of vegetables and ripened those fruits that grow upon the surface of this globe, there was likewise an immense store of central fire reserved within the bowels of the earth, not only for the generation of gems, fossils, and all the purposes of the mineral world; but likewise, for cherishing and keeping alive those plants which would otherwise perish by the winter's cold. The existence of such a fire, he proved from the nature of all those volcanos, which in almost every corner of the earth, are continually vomiting up either flames or smoke. "These, said he, are the great vents appointed by nature, for the discharge of that rarified air, and combustible matter, which if confined, would burst the globe asunder; but besides the larger outlets, there are some small chimnies through which part of the heat transpires; a vapour of that sort, I conceive, must pass through the bed or channel of this spring, the waters of which, accordingly, retain a moderate warmth."

This account, which totally overthrew the other's doctrine, was so extremely agreeable to the audience, that the testy doctor lost his temper, and gave them to understand without preamble, that he must be a person wholly ignorant of natural philosophy, who could invent such a ridic-

ulous system, and they involved in worse than an Ægyptian fog, that could not at once discern its weakness and absurdity. This declaration introduced a dispute, which was unanimously determined in favour of our adventurer. On all such occasion, the stream of prejudice runs against the physician, even though his antagonist has nothing to recommend himself to the favour of the spectators: and this decision depends upon divers considerations; in the first place, there is a continual war carried on against the learned professions, by all those who, conscious of their own ignorance, seek to level the reputation of their superiors, with their own. Secondly, in all disputes upon physic, that happen betwixt a person who really understands the art, and an illiterate pretender, the arguments of the first will seem obscure and unintelligible to those who are unacquainted with the previous systems on which they are built; while the other's theory, derived from common notions, and superficial observation, will be more agreeable, because better adapted to the comprehension of the hearers. Thirdly, the judgment of the multitude is apt to be biassed by that surprize, which is the effect of seeing an artist foiled at his own weapons, by one who engages him only for amusement.

Fathom, besides these advantages, was blest with a flow of language, an elegant address, a polite and self-denying stile of argumentation, together with a temper not to be ruffled; so that the victory could not long waver between him and the physician, to whom he was infinitely superior in every acquisition but that of solid learning, of which the judges had no idea. This contest was not only glorious but profitable to our adventurer, who grew into such request in his medical capacity, that the poor doctor was utterly deserted by his patients, and Fathom's advice sollicited by every valetudinarian in the place; nor did he forfeit the

character he thus acquired, by any miscarriages in his practice; being but little conversant with the Materia medica, the circle of his prescriptions was very small: his chief study was to avoid all drugs of rough operation, and uncertain effect; and to adminster such only as should be agreeable to the palate, without doing violence to the constitution. Such a physician could not but be agreeable to people of all dispositions; and as most of the patients were in some shape hypochondriac, the power of imagination co-operating with his remedies, often effected a cure.

On the whole, it became the fashion to consult the count in all distempers, and his reputation would have had its run, though the death of every patient had given the lie to his pretensions. But empty fame was not the sole fruit of his success. Though no person would presume to affront this noble graduate with a fee; they did not fail to manifest their gratitude by some more valuable present: every day some superb piece of china, curious snuff-box or jewel was pressed upon him; so that at the end of the season, he could almost have furnished a toy-shop, with the acknowledgments he had received: not only his avarice but his pleasure was gratified in the course of his medical administration. He enjoyed free access, egress and regress, with all the females at the well, and no matron scrupled to put her daughter under his care and direction. These opportunities could not be lost upon a man of his intriguing genius; though he conducted his amours with such discretion, that during the whole season, no lady's character suffered on his account: yet he was highly fortunate in his addresses; and we may venture to affirm, that the reproach of barrenness was more than once removed by the vigour of his endeavours.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

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